Paper chains: the techno-politics of communication in modern India

Pragya Dhital

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD/MPhil

2015

Department of the Study of Religions

SOAS, University of London

Contents

Contents 2
Abstract 4
Acronyms 5
A note on transliterations and translations 6
Acknowledgements 7
Introduction 9
Empty homogenous time 12
Symbolic mediation 19
The dispositif of state 25
The insurrectionary possibilities of writing 32
Methodology and chapter plan 37
Chapter one: The immense writing-machine and the reading public 44
Split publics, forked tongues 50
Language recognition and misrecognition 57
The reading public 71
Chapter two: Impossible speech 82
Abul Kalam Azad: 'Imam ul-Hind' 86
Aziz Burney: *Azizul Hind* 111
Chapter three: Emergency pedagogy 124
Chaos in the air 132
Prison writers 140
"Back to the barbaric feudal days" 146
"We, representing the entire political spectrum in the country" 150
Reader voters 157
Chapter four: The model code of conduct and the scandal of democracy 163
The 'sacred' time-space of popular sovereignty 172
The scandal of democracy: void 179
The scandal of democracy: excess 186
Supplementary legality and democratic anarchy 201
Conclusion 206
Bibliography 212

Declaration for SOAS PhD thesis

I have read and understood regulation 17.9 of the Regulations for students of the SOAS, University of London concerning plagiarism. I undertake that all the material presented for examination is my own work and has not been written for me, in whole or in part, by any other person. I also undertake that any quotation or paraphrase from the published or unpublished work of another person has been duly acknowledged in the work which I present for examination.

Signed: _____ Date: ___30/09/2015_____

Abstract

This thesis sets out to challenge identitarian understandings of group formation premised in a dichotomous view of state-society relations, by paying closer attention to the technical means by which groups are sought to be mediated. It proposes to do so through the concept of techno-politics, which encompasses literacy as a technology that is not limited to the study of texts or the exclusive preserve of the literate. It aims to contribute to literature on modern Indian politics, and also to that on general themes and specific topics. At the meta-level it offers a reconsideration of social and political communication. In general, state language and media policy, censorship, emergency rule and electoral law. Specifically, Urdu's status and fluctuating fortunes in post-Independence India; the first iteration of Abul Kalam Azad's *al-Hilal* magazine, discussed in genealogical relation to later Urdu journalism; the internal emergency of 1975-77; and the 2014 general election.

Through case studies of an 'exceptional' language and various 'special' periods, it seeks to cover both critical events and the workings of the everyday state. In keeping with its scepticism about unilinear sender-message-receiver models of communication, it is based on a multi-layered methodological approach: the reading of government reports and statistical information, constitutions and legal codes, against the findings of archival research, interviews and ethnographic observation, conducted in north India over two years in total, between August 2010 and September 2014.

Acronyms

AAP – Aam Admi Party
ABC – Audit Bureau of Circulation
BJP – Bharatiya Janata Party
BSP – Bahujan Samaj Party
CM – Chief Minister
DAVP – Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity
DM – District Magistrate
ECI – Election Commission of India
GOI – Government of India
IRS – Indian Readership Survey
JS – Jana Sangh
MISA – Maintenance of Internal Security Act
NCPUL – National Council for the Promotion of Urdu Language
NDA – National Democratic Alliance
OBC – Other Backward Caste
RNI – Registrar of Newspapers for India
RSS – Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SC – Scheduled Caste
SP – Samajwadi Party
ST – Scheduled Tribe
SVD – Samyukta Vidhayak Dal
UNI – United News of India
UP – Uttar Pradesh
UPA – United Progressive Alliance
VHP – Vishwa Hindu Parishad

A note on transliterations and translations

As this is not a work on language or philology, I have not adapted common spellings or given names to comply with transliteration guidelines. For the sake of consistency, I have also not italicised 'foreign' words. Unattributed translations from French, Hindi and Urdu have been done by me.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank Jan-Peter Hartung, who made it possible for me to complete my PhD by taking me on as a student in the Study of Religions department at SOAS. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the members of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at SOAS, who facilitated this move: Cosimo Zene, Peter Flügel and Andrea Janku, Head of Department, Research Tutor and Associate Dean of Research, respectively. Jörg Haustein joined my committee at a late stage, and I am very glad that he eventually did. He went beyond disciplinary boundaries and area specialisations to engage with my thesis: each conversation with him helped clarify an aspect of the project and push it forward, all of his comments on my written work were substantive and helpful. David Gilmartin and Mark Hobart also responded with generosity and incisive criticism to unsolicited chapter drafts. Rochana Bajpai, Syed Mohammed Faisal, Laurent Gayer, Caroline Osella and Rahul Rao looked at different chapters and offered useful advice on how they could be improved. I am particularly grateful to Faisal for telling me about the Silk Letter Movement, and to Caroline for extraordinary feats of teaching and much kindness. The Berlin Graduate School for the Study of Muslim Cultures and Societies and British Association of South Asian Studies provided funding for preliminary research and language training. Students whom I taught in the Anthropology and Politics departments at SOAS supplied the human element and the fun, and our tutorials were the occasion for many of the ideas developed in this thesis.

I also received feedback on work in progress during a number of workshops and conferences: the Zentrum Moderner Orient workshop on Identifying New Themes in South Asian History, Berlin, July 2010; the Mapping controversies research student workshop with Bruno Latour at the Delhi University European Studies Programme, January 2011; the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, Cultural Studies Workshop on Empire, Nation, Cosmopolitanism, Jaipur, January 2011; “Beyond the Metropolis: Implications of Urbanisation in Towns and Small Cities in South Asia”, a conference held at the South Asia

Institute, Heidelberg University, June 2012; and “Debating the Ancient and Present: An Interactive Workshop with Romila Thapar” held at the South Asian University, New Delhi, August 2013.

An acknowledgement of all the people who assisted me with my research in India would be a book in itself. This is a small selection: staff and librarians in the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Central Secretariat library, Jamia Millia University library, the Urdu Academy in Lucknow, the National Archives of India, the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library and the P.C. Joshi Archives on Contemporary History were efficient, helpful and pleasant to work with. Ali Abbas, Arjumand Ara, Azhar Masud, Timsal Masud, Ishrat Zaheer and Mohammad Yusuf patiently taught me Urdu. Arjumand was especially long-suffering, and I was extraordinarily lucky to have her as a teacher and a friend. I have benefited enormously from her profound knowledge of Urdu language and literature, Indian politics and everyday life in Uttar Pradesh. Ram Advani, S.M. Faizan Ahmad, Hoda Bandeh-Ahmadi, Karolina Hedström, Kiran Kothari, Bhaskar Kowshik, Deepak Mehta, Takashi Miyamoto, Namita Nair, Francesco Obino, Rabindra Ray, Syed Haider Abbas Rizvi, Najma Seth, Anita Sharma, Shakeel Siddiqui, Abid Suhail, Renny Thomas and Ram Dutt Tripathi also provided good company and sound advice during fieldwork.

Introduction

"A second glance at any activity undermines the easy, commonsense idea that humans speak and act." (Latour 1994: 54)

Recent socio-political change in India, greater electoral volatility and alliances amongst disadvantaged groups, which cut across lines of caste, religion and ethnicity, would appear to confound standard identity-based explanations of social and political behaviour. These trends seemed to be combined in the 2014 Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party's election victory, in which vote bank politics, voting on the basis of ascriptive identity, was apparently superseded by the BJP's inclusive development agenda of "sabka saath, sabka vikas" (together with all, development for all).

In a section of the BJP's 2014 election manifesto titled "Widen the Platform", this message was directed to segments of the population said to have been "historically disadvantaged" due to "a lopsided development approach and skewed allocation of resources" (BJP 2014: 15). Encompassed under this label were the familiar categories of the poor and marginalized, religious minorities such as Muslims, Scheduled Castes and the Other Backward Classes, socio-economically disadvantaged castes not listed in the Indian constitution's schedule of castes entitled to reservations. But the term also included a cross-denominational group identified as the "neo middle class", consisting of those who have "risen from the category of the poor" and are "yet to stabilize in the middle class" (ibid: 17). Appeals to this amorphous group seemed to be part of the BJP's attempt to shake off its upper-caste Hindu image and counterpoise the newly founded Aam Admi Party's populist appeals to the "aam admi" ("ordinary man").

The final chapter of this thesis, which partly deals with the 2014 election, will look at the BJP's election campaign in closer detail. Across the thesis as a whole I argue that socio-political change could be better understood by not taking identity for granted as a static and exclusive form of affiliation, and focusing instead on the processes through which various groups are ventriloquized: 'the nation', 'the people', this or that 'community' or 'class',

remaining mindful all the while that the groups invoked neither seamlessly map onto those they describe nor remain external to their formation. The subjects I deal with might be easily identified as 'political': state language and media policy in post-Independence India, 'seditious' journalism in the colonial and post-colonial period, attempts to control public communication through emergency rule and election law. But I aim to depart from a classical political science approach to speeches, texts and voting behaviour, based in a broad-brush mass communications model.

This project was provoked into existence by dissatisfaction with generalizing accounts of group formation, which begin by identifying a group and therefore fail to account for variability and heterogeneity. In the first instance, by the discrepancy between the multilingual Indian media scene and Benedict Anderson's description of how large anonymous communities such as nations are created through the practice of reading a newspaper written in a single language dealing with events occurring all over the world (Anderson 1991). At the same time it is inspired by Anderson's insights into how everyday practices effect large-scale socio-political transformations by altering the way people perceive time, space and community, and his sensitivity to the role played by language and media in this process. That is, it takes issue with his universalist assumptions at the same time as being informed by his insights into how universal forms become effective in particular settings.

It is also a response to more sociological understandings of group formation, which attempt to negotiate between producing reifying accounts of how they are bounded and a distorting blindness to how stubborn they can be once formed; in particular, to Bourdieu's work on symbolic power (1994, 1987a, 1987b, 1984) and Paul Brass's multi-symbol congruence theory (2004, 1991, 1989 and 1974). Both theorists attempt to go beyond essentialising perspectives on groups and mechanistic understandings of the operations of power, which do not allow for synchronic and diachronic variation within 'given' groups. In

so far as these theories denaturalise the categories of class, ethnicity and nationality by playing close attention to how they are made through communicative practices, I find their work useful. But I argue that their continued reliance upon them, and instrumentalist understanding of how they are achieved, tips the balance in favour of an 'objective' view of society in which actors are fitted within a network whose coordinates are determined in advance.

I have therefore been drawn towards some aspects of Actor Network Theory, and in particular to Latour's concept of "technical mediation" (1994), in which meaning is not just transported by its medium but, in part, made by it. Thinking of meaning creation as something that "does not antecede technological devices" (Latour 1991a: 19) is a radical departure from conceptualisations of it as something that is merely distorted in dissemination through the biases of mediators and inefficiency of transmission media. These understandings are often the corollaries of totalising social theories, which view information/knowledge/meanings as the stuff that bind social groups, be they primordial, constructed or imagined. Whereas I understand collectivities to include people, things and abstractions, and the way they mutually constitute one another, and argue that there are multiple agencies and actors at work in this process.

I am accordingly inclined to focus on what Latour describes as the means and instruments that make a grouping "*reach* a bit further and *stand* a bit longer" (2005b: 35): the 'paper chains' along which messages are sent by various agencies, and through which collectivities are mediated. This means I pay attention to texts such as newspapers and journals, party manifestoes, policy documents and codified laws, but I also deal with non-textual aspects of their production and dissemination – from how they are financed to how they are printed and intersect with other media. In this way I hope to better reflect the contingencies of their production and the unpredictable nature of their reception. By taking into account the techno-politics of communication, I hope to modify standard models of the

transparency of speech, without replacing the intentionality of human actors working through the state and markets with the material constraints of technology. Rather, I propose an expanded conception of technology, which would render the concept of material determinants redundant and thus allow more possibilities *for* speech – encompass non-verbal communication and non-human agency.

I will begin by briefly outlining the aspects of Anderson, Paul Brass and Pierre Bourdieu's theories that seem applicable or inapplicable to the cases I study, and then proceed to describe the alternative concepts of 'the dispositif of state' and the 'insurrectionary possibilities of writing'. The final section will outline the methodology for my project and the organisation of the thesis as a whole.

Empty homogenous time

In *Imagined Communities,* Anderson sets himself against "provincial European thinking about the rise of nationalism" by locating its origins further west, in the new American states of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (1991: 47). Language was not a factor in differentiating these states from the imperial metropolis as they were all "creole states, formed and led by people who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought" (ibid: 47). By de-emphasising vernacular culture and nativism as determinants, Anderson throws into relief the greater significance of other factors: increased but limited mobility, print capitalism. Although this produces a much less essentialist view of nationalism, one which stresses its dynamism and ingenuity, standard ideas about national space-time remain intact in this work. The nation-state is viewed as a western innovation, albeit Anderson's west lies further west than just Europe and indirect non-European input is acknowledged. The nation is also linked to a progressive notion of historical time. According to Anderson, Walter Benjamin's notion of empty homogeneous

time is “a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (Anderson 1991: 26). A modular form of the nation is imagined: originating in the west, progressing through time, and moving flatly and evenly across space.

These rather abstract notions are embodied in the processes of print-capitalism. Capitalism and print technology are said to have created the conditions for “a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation” (ibid: 46). Mass consumption of newspapers in particular established the basic morphological elements of these imagined communities: a conception of empty homogeneous time and universal space, as events occurring all over the world are connected by “calendrical coincidence” (ibid: 33). Anderson expands upon the importance of universality in *The Spectre of Comparisons*, where he argues that newspapers, in taking “this world of mankind” as their domain, reinforce a sense of “natural universality”, which, alongside empty homogeneous time, is a conceptual prerequisite for the development of national consciousness (1998b: 33). Everyday practices “rooted in industrial material civilization” thus “displaced the cosmos to make way for the world” (ibid: 29). That is, displaced cosmological notions of time and the centripetal and porous spatializations of dynastic states.

Language is said to have played a key part in this process. *Imagined Communities* proceeds from the assumption that the bulk of mankind has always been monolingual and widely held ideas about the logic of markets to describe how the “revolutionary vernacularizing thrust of capitalism” created monoglot mass reading publics, which evolved into national publics (1991: 39). In *The Spectre of Comparisons*, Anderson links this to what he describes as the planetary spread of “a profoundly standardized conception of politics” (1998b: 29). This apparently worked at both the linguistic and conceptual level. Languages were standardized as they became associated with political units; political concepts were standardized as they were translated into print-languages. For example, “quotidian

universals" were created as particular figures (e.g. monarchs) were located in a "single categorical series" and presented "to the simultaneous imaginings of millions of people around the world" (ibid: 33).

Heterogeneity in the form of multilingualism, or at least recent emergence of multilingual nations, is acknowledged in *Imagined Communities*, but these aberrations from the monoglot norm are explained by the fact that the nation is itself, by now, the "overwhelming norm" (1991: 135). Nations can be imagined without linguistic communality because "of general awareness of what history has demonstrated to be possible" (ibid: 135). Political standardization in multi-ethnic last wave nations is therefore said to have been a second-hand process. Unlike the language of politics in Europe, where terms such as 'industrialism' were coined after the phenomena they described came into existence, vocabularies of politics in Asia and Africa preceded their institutional realization. Political concepts were "read about, then modelled from" (1998b: 32).

It is not difficult to challenge an argument as broad in its outlines as this with the details of specific case studies. To speak of language and locality alone, Anderson's theories about natural universality, monolingualism, and linguistic and conceptual standardization are contradicted by practices in Hindi and Urdu knowing parts of India, which are the focus of my research. On the one hand, consumption of a particular newspaper written in a particular language would seem to identify a reader's national, ethnic and political location. This is why politicians and advertisers seek to influence specific groups through certain papers: Muslims through the Urdu press; Hindus through the Hindi press; relatively affluent readers through English media; voters in a constituency through a local edition of a paper. On the other hand, these identifications are complicated by the fact that consumers and producers have multiple and shifting locations. This is evident in many newspapers' lack of consistent political message and divergent conceptions of what constitutes their locality – changes in the areas covered by papers and readerships outside designated localities.

Anderson's claim that "newspapers everywhere" have a universal scope, because it would be unnatural for them to confine their reports to the political realm in which they are published (1998b: 33), would seem to be disproved by (outsider) localisation of the content of Hindi papers on the one hand, and the increasingly international focus (in so far as it relates to the ummah) of Urdu press on the other. Both Hindi and Urdu newspapers seem to focus on events within their own differently defined realms rather than the "world of mankind" generally.

Regarding monolingualism and linguistic standardization, Anderson's arguments are complicated by the history of Hindi and Urdu, the saga of how a language known by a variety of names, spoken in a range of dialects and written in a number of scripts became Hindi and Urdu, languages that in their spoken forms are virtually indistinguishable, but which are written in two different scripts. This does not quite accord with Anderson's theory of how idiolects evolve into standard print-languages. Locality and language are combined when Anderson argues that natural universality is further encouraged "by an unselfconscious standardization of vocabulary which radically overrides any formal division in the newspaper between local and foreign news" (1998b: 33). Again, his thesis is belied by the particular development of Hindi and Urdu, with some written forms of both languages self-consciously straining to differentiate themselves from one another: Hindi taking a greater proportion of its literary and technical vocabulary from Sanskrit, Urdu looking to Persian and Arabic. Not to mention the history and continued existence of multilingual newspapers in India.

With regard to conceptual standardisation, theorists working on South Asia have contested the idea that political concepts originating in the West were simply borrowed in the non-West. Kaviraj has written of how modern political concepts failed to translate in India, remained confined to an 'upper' state-centred discourse which was radically at odds with a 'lower' discourse of indigenous politics (1997). To this he attributes the failure of various Nehruvian modernisation projects. The idea that there is such a thing as a standard

form of politics is not directly challenged, but Kaviraj diverges from Anderson in refusing it universal applicability. Other writers have argued that modern political concepts such as democracy and the nation have been successfully adopted through creation of institutions that are responsive to local conditions (Kohli 2002) and translation into religio-cultural idioms (Hauser and Singer 1986). Both strands of literature (literature of failure, literature of success) oppose the idea of a simple adoption of so-called universal forms, both emphasise the particular.

Significantly, Anderson is himself aware of the contradictions inherent in his ironic faith in "the goodness of nations", whose "unbound serialities" he perceives to be the most inclusive forms of community, encompassing, as they do, various ethnicities and races, The Unborn, The Living and The Dead (1998b). This awareness is evident in his contrary use of Walter Benjamin's concept of 'empty homogenous time', which Benjamin intended as a critique of social democratic notions of progress and which Anderson deploys as a description of the ideal time-space of the nation. Within his very use of the concept lies an awareness of a critique of it.

A more nuanced understanding of nationalism is also expressed in his comparative study of the effects of colonial language policy in Southeast Asia. In this essay he finds proof of the emancipatory potential of a national language in the unlikely setting of Indonesia under Suharto. Dutch Romanization of Bahasa Indonesia and the Japanese decision to persist with this policy meant that by the 1950s Indonesia found itself with "a simple and uncontroversial *written and spoken* national and official language" (1996: 21). This was a product of economic and political expediency rather than linguistic nationalism, but its potential is said to have been developed in the 1910s and 1920s by the popular left-wing press and the Sino-Indonesian community, and to have been realized in a tetralogy of novels written by the dissident Indonesian writer and historian, Pramoedya Ananta Toer (ibid: 24). Anderson's description of the radical potential of national forms ("open-to-the-world

plurals") might be attractive, but, as I have described using the case of South Asia, and as he himself describes using the case of South-East Asia, at odds with what can be readily observed. Indeed, he chooses to emphasise the paradoxes inherent in his argument: the colonial origins of this emancipatory tool, the fact that despite Indonesia's successful development of a national language it compares badly in terms of national unity and free public forums with the Philippines, whose unity is said to be assured by its citizens *underdeveloped* sense of nationality. This is said to be apparent in a linguistic situation, much like India's, where there is "no consensus on a national language, and none is spoken or written comfortably by a commanding majority of the population" (ibid: 17). Anderson's account of nationalism is at one and the same time descriptive and prescriptive, in other words, normative.

The fact that Anderson is able to pre-empt and absorb these objections indicates that critiques of universalist assumptions about community, history and politics need to do more than point to instances where their categories and temporalities fail to apply. As Dipesh Chakrabarty observes, "an absolutist relativism can easily be shown to be self-contradictory" (2002: 82). Chakrabarty himself attempts to find a middle-way, arguing in his essay on "Universalism and Belonging in the Logic of Capital" that grasping a category such as capital means both recognizing its limits *and* grasping its universal constitution. In place of usual descriptions of transitions to capitalism, Chakrabarty speaks of how the empty, universal history posited by capital, History 1, is modified and domesticated through History 2s, pasts that inhere in capital but do not belong to its life process (ibid: 99). That is, which do not ineluctably look forward to capital and therefore both "interrupt and punctuate" the run of its totalizing logic (ibid: 99). Chakrabarty describes this as a two-way process of translation rather than a transition. Rather than rejecting universalism altogether, he describes how the universal acts as an empty placeholder, "its place always usurped by a historical particular seeking to present itself as the universal" (ibid: 105).

Chatterjee goes even further by refusing universality itself, critiquing assumptions about national time-space, which underlie Anderson's theories about nationalism (Chatterjee 2004). Building on Bhabha's idea of the split temporality of the nation, its pedagogic and performative temporal registers (Bhabha 2004), he writes about the nation in heterogeneous time, the particular manifestations of it in parts of the world labelled 'backward', 'modernising' or 'developing'. He describes forms of popular politics spawned by governmentality, which elide Anderson's distinction between bound and unbound serialities (Anderson 1998a and 1998b). Chatterjee combines both critiques to show how political society emerges from the governmental operations of nation-states, as groups defined as populations (pedagogical objects for 'developing' nations) represent themselves as identity groups (potential vote-banks and subsets of the peoples that endow nations with popular sovereignty) in order to access state resources.

These approaches inform my understanding of the 'modern', used to describe a period that spans India's experience of both colonialism and independence. Each chapter deals with the colonial and post-colonial period, not just to see how the former influences the latter, but also to trace the outlines of what Michael Freeden has described as a shared "idea environment" (1983), spanning ideologies as well as epochs (liberalism, socialism), whose progressive ideals are based in what Timothy Mitchell describes as the spatiotemporal "staging" of capitalist modernity (2000). I am particularly interested in what Mitchell describes as the possibility of "shift, displacement, or contamination" inherent in each "staging" of the "historical immediacy and spatial extension" of the social world and "the unified global history of modernity" (ibid: 23-24). In both periods I focus upon such moments of slippage, look for vestiges of other ways of imagining community and conceptualising the movement of historical time.

Symbolic mediation

In a similar vein to writing which seeks a middle-path between universalism and particularism in understanding nationalism, Brass and Bourdieu attempt to go beyond standard objectivist and subjectivist accounts of ethnicity and class through theories of symbolic mediation. Bourdieu writes that obedience to state injunctions cannot be understood as either "mechanical submission to an external force or as conscious consent to an order" (Bourdieu et al 1994: 14), but describes a social world "riddled with *calls to order*" (ibid). In *Language and Symbolic Power* he attempts to transcend alternative "energetic models, which describe social relations as relations of force, and cybernetic models, which turn them into relations of communication" through the concept of symbolic power, which by "dissimulation and transfiguration" efficiently transubstantiates power relations by rendering "recognizable and misrecognizable" the violence they contain (1994: 170).

Brass also opposes cybernetic theories of national "integration", according to which the "the 'gap' between the modernizing elite" and the "masses" is "reduced or overcome by the communication to the mass of the goals of the elite and the transformation of mass values to make them compatible with the aspirations of the elite" (1974: 5-6). He argues that shared differences do not in themselves produce a subjective sense of identity. Ethnic groups are said to be "objectively distinct" but not necessarily attaching "importance or political significance to that fact" (ibid: 8). In this way, he differs from ethno-symbolists such as Anthony Smith, who are reluctant to see nations as "just so many populations bounded in political space" and seek more affective bases for their formation (Smith 1993: 2). Smith argues that while "population size, economic resources, communications systems and bureaucratic centralization" help create the environment of nations, "they tell us little about the distinctive qualities and character of the national community that emerges" (ibid: 3). For this he suggests we "turn to more 'subjective' factors...cultural attributes of memory, value, myth and symbolism" (ibid), and towards this end proposes the concept of "*ethnie* (ethnic

communities)…named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity" (ibid: 32). But for Brass an ethnic group is merely a group of people who share certain "objective" characteristics; a community is an ethnic group "whose members have developed an awareness of a common identity", and a nationality is a community that "mobilizes for political action and becomes politically significant" (1974: 8). Some kind of political agency is required to effect the transition from ethnic group to community to nationality, in particular, state policy and elite politicking.

Symbols play an important part in this process, too. Whereas nationalist elites are said to "emphasize one symbol above others and strive to bring other symbols into congruence with the primary symbol" in order to foster a national identity coextensive with the modern state, indigenous elites, who place more value on caste, religion and region, "seek to induce multi-symbol congruence in their groups to achieve separateness and political rights" (Brass 1974: 45). Such an approach does not begin with the nation and process of modernization and ask how each territorial group of people reaches these goals, but begins with the ethnic group and asks "under what conditions do ethnic groups develop into nations" (ibid: 7).

Brass is aware that even this is problematic given that "objective" differences are themselves "highly variable" (ibid: 405). With regard to language, in "traditional societies, the differences between elite and mass speakers of a particular language or communicants of a particular religion may be as great or greater than the differences between ordinary people who are presumed to speak different languages or practice different religions" (ibid). With regard to the region he is focusing on this is further encouraged by dialectical diversity in the "so-called Hindi-speaking area" (ibid: 407), resulting in a situation where "ordinary Hindus and Muslims can communicate more easily with each other than they can with elite speakers of their own religious group" (ibid: 405). Nevertheless, his definition of ethnic

groups is orthodox in its reference to "language, culture, territory, diet, and dress [rather] than to a role in the division of labor" (ibid: 8). The idea of ethnicities and nations as isolable and quantifiable units persists.

Similarly, Bourdieu continues to use the term class even as he rejects the usual economist understandings of it. In defining the term he attempts to go beyond both views of social groups in which agents are classified like objects, and a subjectivist perspective, according to which they construct social reality (1987b: 1). For Bourdieu agents are "both classified and classifiers, but they classify according to (or depending upon) their position within classifications" (ibid: 2). He seeks to reveal the structure of symbolic space within which social practices take place by partially setting aside pre-constituted variables such as "socio-occupational category" (1984: 102), retrieving "class habitus, the internalized form of class condition and of the conditioning it entails", and from this constructing "the *objective class*", a set of agents placed in "homogenous conditions of existence imposing homogenous conditionings and producing homogenous systems of dispositions capable of generating similar practices" (ibid: 101). By reconstituting these homogenous units from the perspective of "three-dimensional space", defined by "volume of capital, composition of capital, and change in these two properties over time", he attempts to account for their variability and changeability within a schema that is "unitary and specific" (ibid: 114).

Brass and Bourdieu's attachment to these ill-fitting labels seems to ultimately favour an 'objective' view of social reality, which verges on being deterministic if not essentialist. This tendency is particularly pronounced in Bourdieu's work, in whose field theory relations are formed within a grid of objective structures rather than as a result of potentially unstable interactions, as in George Mead's theory of symbolic interactionism (Mead 1967). In "Legitimation and Structured Interests in Weber's Sociology of Religion", Bourdieu distinguishes between "direct interactions" and "the objective structure of the relations that become established between religious agencies", and claims that the latter is crucial (1987a:

126). The structure of "the objective relations between the positions these agents occupy in the religious field" is said to both determine the form of these interactions and their representation (ibid: 121). These owe their *specific* form to the play of interests: lay people's expectations of the this-worldly outcomes of magical or religious action, competition for religious legitimacy and followers amongst religious agents.

A corollary of this view is a kind of instrumentalism. Although Brass speaks of the "the ways in which a people creates its own history through a conscious process of symbol selection" (1974: 121) and Bourdieu of "deeply buried corporeal dispositions, outside the channels of consciousness and calculation" (Bourdieu et al 1994: 14), both describe how symbols are instrumentalised by states and elites to construct social groups (classes, ethnicities) on their own terms. Elites are the main agents in these operations, but the state is the motive power: owner of "meta-capital" in the work of Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al 1994: 4), and therefore capable of spanning the various fields, the catalyst for subjective consciousness of identity in Brass.

Brass was to modify his opinions in response to criticism of this early work, and reject an "extreme instrumentalist perspective" that would deny history and agency to the groups it describes by representing their pre-existing cultural and religious practices as "infinitely malleable by elites" (1991: 77). There is a more diffuse sense of the workings of power in his later work on communal violence in India, which he has ascribed to a reading of Foucault (Brass 2000). But he reiterates his basic thesis on language politics and applies it to a wider pan-Indian context three decades later in the article "Elite interests, popular passions, and social power in the language politics of India" (2004).

Bourdieu's understanding of the state is also more multidimensional and dynamic than Althusser's theory of the state apparatus, but he speaks of it in familiar totalising terms as "the *culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital*" (Bourdieu et al 1994: 4; italics in the original). This is said to include "capital of physical force or

instruments of coercion (army, police), economic capital, cultural or (better) informational capital, and symbolic capital" (ibid). From this process of concentration the state emerges as "a sort of meta-capital granting power over other species of capital and over their holders" (ibid). Those who question the seamlessness of the state's monopoly are said to ignore the effects of its "obligatory reference to the values of neutrality and disinterested loyalty to the public good", including upon bureaucrats themselves (ibid: 17). Through these unfold "the long work of symbolic construction", whereby "official representation of the state as the site of universality and of service of the general interest is invented and imposed" (ibid). But, as I will go on to demonstrate in subsequent chapters, the state can also be experienced and known through unofficial transactions and constructed in discourses of corruption. In their introduction to a collection of essays on the everyday state in India, Fuller and Harriss point out that, through these, too, in the negative, a picture of what an ideal, impartial state should be can sometimes emerge (2000), but this suggests a more indirect and haphazard process than symbolic construction.

Casting about for an alternative understanding of the 'mechanics' at work, one responsive to the case of Urdu in particular, I was initially drawn to more fine-grained studies of the Indian state in the past and present day. From a historical perspective, to Dalmia's book on Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu poet and Hindi-advocate, Harischandra, in nineteenth century Banaras (1999), and Stark's on the multilingual Naval Kishore Press in Lucknow (2007), works which substantiate and counterpoise Brass's arguments through their accounts of north Indian language movements and print culture. Both describe dichotomisation of the categories Hindi-Urdu and Hindu-Muslim as effects (intended or not) of colonial rule. For instance, as a result of the decision to declare Urdu court language in the North-Western Provinces in 1837, enhancing the status of that language at the same time as catalysing into existence a Hindi language movement with Hindu and Indian nationalist undercurrents. However, their descriptions of how Harischandra and publishing

magnate Naval Kishore sought to advance the cause of Hindi and Urdu for both personal gain and altruistic ends, whilst participating in the process of dichotomisation that would lead to the decline of the latter, undermines any view of religio-cultural identities as determined by state intervention and 'elite' machinations.

At the same time this history does not quite accord with anthropologist James Scott's account of the autonomy conferred by "unique languages", which he views as treasuries of local knowledge and therefore formidable obstacles to external control (Scott 1998: 72). By attempting to *see* like a state, Scott draws attention to "legibility as a central problem of statecraft" (ibid: 5). The "synoptic" state depicted is unlike the panoptic state in that it is always foreshadowed by the potential failure of its projects, with state simplifications continually outpaced by local knowledge and improvisations (ibid: 79). Illegibility of neighbourhoods and vernaculars/unique languages, in particular, are said to be a resource for local political autonomy:

> A distinct language, however, is a far more powerful basis for autonomy than a complex residential pattern. It is also the bearer of a distinctive history, a cultural sensibility, a literature, a mythology, a musical past. In this respect, a unique language represents a formidable obstacle to state knowledge, let alone colonization, control, manipulation, instruction, or propaganda.
> (ibid: 72)

Histories of Urdu, on the other hand, speak of the role played by cultural sensibility, literature, myth, a musical past *and* state knowledge, colonization, control, manipulation, instruction and propaganda. In North India one finds both strong state influence on language and media and a range of dialects and languages that baffle attempts to control communication, even at the basic level of linguistic standardisation. Neither aspect of its history supports a view of the state as an "apparatus that stands apart from the rest of the social world", or the opposed but complementary notion of the subject "who stands *outside* the state and refuses its demands", from "some wholly exterior social space" (Mitchell 1991: 93).

The dispositif of state

When thinking of the operations of power, and of state power in particular, in place of this image of the apparatus/instrument I posit Foucault's use of the term 'dispositif', heterogeneous assemblies that between them establish a shifting network of relations. These arise at a given historical moment in response to a strategic imperative, but are expressed within and influenced by this same network; or, as he put it in an interview, titled "Le jeu de Michel Foucault" ("The game of Michel Foucault"), in which he expands upon this concept: "Le dispositif lui-même, c'est le réseau qu'on peut établir entre ces elements" (1994: 299). ("The dispositif itself is the network which can be established between these elements.") The English translation of this interview glosses dispositif as "apparatus" and réseau as "system" (1980: 194), which overstates the coherence of the process. Foucault speaks of a "*jeu*" of these elements: "Bref, entre ces éléments, discursifs ou non, il y a comme un jeu, des changements de position, des modifications de fonctions, qui peuvent, eux aussi, être très différents" (1994: 299). ("In sum, between these elements, discursive or not, it is like a game, [with] changes of position, modifications of function, which can, between them also, be very different.") This describes a much more ambiguous and open-ended relation than the model of interactions contained in Bourdieu's field theory in which "objective structures" form the basis for the "'typical' behaviour of participants" (Bourdieu et al 2013: 116).

When questioned, in the aforementioned interview, on what he means by "non-discursive" elements, Foucault specifies them as everything that functions as a system of social constraint that is not an utterance, for example, an institution (1980: 197-198). In response to Jacques-Alain Miller's observation that institutions are discursive, too, he lightly concedes the point (ibid: 198). Earlier, he also describes dispositifs as consisting of "the said as much as the unsaid": discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic

positions (ibid: 194). I therefore interpret it as not being limited to the *human* capacity for speech/discourse rather than simply non-discursive. Whilst acknowledging that these terms are not mutually exclusive, I prefer the term 'dispositif' to 'discourse', because it is better able to capture the role of technology in affecting the mixture of human and non-human agency involved in any speech act.

This is the aspect of the term which Latour picks up in order to locate purposeful action and intentionality in dispositifs rather than humans *or* objects: corporate bodies that are able to absorb mediators, regulate their expansion and redistribute their skills (1994: 46). Latour's description of "technical mediation" in many ways resembles Laclau and Mouffe's definition of "articulation" as "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice" (2014: 91). Articulation is specifically opposed to theorizations of "mediation", much like Anderson's, according to which the fragments of a lost organic unity are organised as necessary moments of a totality which transcends both the fragments and their organisation (ibid: 80). In articulation the organisation is contingent and external to the fragments themselves, rather than based in a conception of society as a "founding totality of its partial processes" (ibid: 82). On the contrary, social relations are constituted and organized through articulatory practices.

Articulation therefore forms the starting point for Laclau and Mouffe's conception of hegemony. It is their chosen heuristic for understanding social aggregation because of its greater responsiveness to the necessarily incomplete character of the social. Latour also argues against the idea of the social as "material" or a "domain", and advances an alternative view of it as "the name of a movement, a displacement, a transformation, a translation, an enrollment" (2005b: 64-65). Rather than speaking of communities, he refers to groups and collectivities, terms empty enough to include all sorts of aggregates of human and non-human actors without specifying their size or contents.

Affinities with Latour's theories are also strong during moments when Laclau and Mouffe refuse what they describe as Foucault's earlier distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices, and affirm "the *material* character of every discursive structure" (2014: 93-94). They illustrate this with the example, in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, of a language game between a builder and his assistant, observing that it is not the idea of a building-stone or slab that "constitutes a differential position and therefore a relational identity", but "the building-stone or the slab as such" (Laclau and Mouffe 2014: 94-95). In his later work on populism, Laclau restates his contention that discourse is not restricted to speech and writing but "any complex of elements in which *relations* play the constitutive role" (2007: 68). He also mentions the possibility of going beyond Saussurean "enthralment" to "phonic and conceptual substances" by taking on board the insights of the Copenhagen and Prague schools of linguistic formalism, in order to abandon "all purely regional linguistic reference" (ibid: 68).

It has been argued that Laclau does not follow through with the promise of these ideas, that his theories lack explanatory force because he continues to deal with discourse in abstract, formal terms – structuralist linguistics and, increasingly, Lacanian psychoanalysis – which are said to be blind to "historical contingencies" (Simons 2011: 212). Simons suggests that these perceived shortcomings could be overcome by paying more attention to the "practical construction" of "the people" through "mass mediated" relations of equivalence and difference, which would be better able to explain why certain hegemonic formations of 'the people' fail and others succeed at a given time (ibid: 214).

As mentioned earlier, I have reservations about the concept of 'mass mediation', and would argue that Laclau and Mouffe's theory of articulation deals more sensitively with the 'contingent' nature of the transmission of messages. But I agree with the general point about paying attention to "practices and institutions" when theorizing ""the discursive construction of "the people"" (ibid). It is for this reason that I prefer the term 'dispositif' to

'discourse', because it seems to better encompass these aspects of this process by being less closely associated with the linguistic, and more attuned to the technical and the material. As expressed through Latour's concept of 'technical mediation' (Latour 1994), in particular, it conveys a stronger sense of how the material is *interwoven into* human thought and activity.[1]

The distinctive aspects of this understanding of technology are foregrounded by how other theorists have understood its role in subjectification and sociation. Deleuze speaks of the 'dispositif' as encompassing a multilinear ensemble, consisting of lines of visibility, enunciation, thought and subjectification (1992: 160); or, more succinctly, as "machines which make one see and speak" (ibid), and for Agamben this is where the trouble starts. His essay, "What is an apparatus?" (2009), traces Foucault's use of the term "dispositif" (which Agamben's English translators follow Foucault's in reproducing as "apparatus") to the theological term oikonomia. This is defined as "management of the home" (ibid: 8), and described as the apparatus through which "the Trinitarian dogma and the idea of a divine providential governance of the world" were introduced into Christianity (ibid: 10). Linked in this way to "a pure activity of governance devoid of any foundation in being", apparatuses are said to always imply a process of subjectification (ibid: 11). He expands the category of apparatuses to include anything that has the capacity to "capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions or discourses of living beings" (ibid: 14). Encompassed under this label are not just the institutions, disciplines and practices that Foucault mentions, but writing and its implements and language itself, described as "perhaps the most ancient of apparatuses" (ibid: 14). In an era of capitalist development, however, apparatuses have gone from being machines that produce subjects to participants in a dehumanising blurring of the processes of subjectification and

[1] In a recent book review, for example, he suggests we break down the "idealized definition of matter" as the solid ground upon which signification rests (2014: 509), and "narrowly ethnocentric" definitions of "what it is to be an object or an organism" (ibid: 508), and pay attention to the role played by the technical in weaving together different entities.

desubjectification (ibid: 21). This is exemplified for Agamben by the cellular telephone, which is said to have reshaped behaviour and made interpersonal relationships more abstract in his native Italy (ibid: 15-16).

In arguing this, Agamben proceeds from what he describes as a "partitioning" of beings into "two large groups or classes": "living beings" and "apparatuses in which living beings are incessantly captured" (ibid: 13). Latour, on the other hand, refuses the dualist separation of humanity and technology, and emphasises that the human body itself is composed of "sociotechnical negotiations and artifacts" (1994: 64). Rather than abstracting social relations, dispositifs help to forge social ties through processes of translation, crossover, enrolment, mobilization and displacement (ibid: 46). For Latour, the term therefore encompasses a two-way process rather than the reshaping of human behaviour by external techno-material constraints.

The implications of this for thinking of communication are expanded upon in *Reassembling the Social* (2005b), his introduction to Actor Network Theory. In this work, Latour, like Anderson, associates newspapers with group formation; indeed, he starts his discussion of group formation and dissolution with the reading of a newspaper, in whose "every two lines, a trace is being left by some writer that some group is being made or unmade" (ibid: 27). But he goes further and argues that newspapers do not only trace these groups or reveal how they are formed, they *make* them: "Who would learn to 'feel European' without the editorials of the liberal press?" (ibid: 29). Groups (*and* those who study and write about them) are "the provisional product of a constant uproar made by the millions of contradictory voices about what is a group and who pertains to what" (ibid: 31). The implications of this idea for political communication specifically are dealt with in the essay "From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik: or How to Make Things Public" (2005a), in which he makes the interesting suggestion that politics should become a branch of disability studies. Rather than valorise the "radiant citizen" freely speaking his mind, acknowledge that we are all

"politically challenged", and reveal the hidden impediments and instruments that impair and enable political talk (ibid: 30).

As well as being a handy way to think of the discursive construction of 'the people', or a particular subset of the same, it can also be used to deal with the obverse process: the discursive construction of the state through the failure or success of these efforts. My sense of the state as the sum of its discursive practices is influenced by Timothy Mitchell's understanding of it as a "structural effect", created by "detailed processes of spatial organization, temporal arrangement, functional specification, and supervision and surveillance" (1991: 95). As this list suggests, his post-structuralist sense of the state owes a great deal to Foucault – specifically recalls the earlier discussion of the dispositif in its awareness of the non-linguistic and material nature of these processes – although here the focus is the state itself rather than those who are subject to its power. I have also found his more empirically based work useful for providing examples of how case studies can be used to think about the operations of state power. From the discussion of mechanistic views of language and statecraft advanced in *Colonizing Egypt* (1988), to his overview of the "techno-politics" of the modern Egyptian state (2002) and his recent book on *Carbon Democracy* (2011) it has worked through the consequences of thinking about human intention as interwoven with a variety of other forces. For example, in the last work, thinking in terms of energy and ecological time makes externalisation of these forces impossible. Thinking of fossil fuels as concentrated time and power in potentia means that the qualities of coal and oil can be directly related to the different types of socio-political organisation and subjective consciousness their extraction helps to produce.

With specific reference to literature on South Asia, I have been inspired by work which has built on these insights to do ethnography of the state, and in particular that done by the political anthropologist Akhil Gupta; by his essay on how local, vernacular Indian newspapers delineate its "multilayered and pluricentric nature" (1995: 38) and also his

discussion of the impact of transnational phenomena produced by global capitalism on how we conceptualise it (Sharma and Gupta 2006). Instead of seeing states as "preconstituted institutions that perform given functions", he deals with how they are produced through everyday practices and public representations (ibid: 27). That this does not excuse state irresponsibility is clear in Gupta's recent work on bureaucracy and structural violence, in which he describes extreme poverty in India as "a direct and culpable form of killing" made possible by its policies and practices (2012: 5). Rather than diffusing the operations of power so widely that it makes it impossible to attribute responsibility for such outcomes, sensitivity to the capillary flow of power allows him to calculate the number of "excess deaths" in India, the number of people missing from the population due to malnutrition and morbidity, to be "approximately 140 million" (ibid).

Gupta's reckoning is in direct contradiction to Amartya Sen's claim that "no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent and democratic country with a relatively free press" (1999: 6-7), a powerful argument lent force by childhood memories of the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, which reverberate through his writings on development. Gupta, however, not taking official pronouncements at their word or locating power in a single place, perceives how 'thanatopolitics' works in spite of proclaimed state policy and regardless of the intentions of bureaucrats. Ethnographic observation of development programs, in which officials are revealed to make decisions on the basis of "guesswork and contingency", attunes him to how they are shot through with "barely controlled chaos" (2012: 14). The resulting scepticism about bureaucracies as representing "the rationalization of power in a disciplinary society" (ibid) sensitises him to the "irrational" faith in qualifications and documents held by officials and those who appeal to them (ibid: 208). Building upon Michael Herzfeld's work on bureaucracies as machines for the social production of indifference (1992), and Kleinman, Das and Lock's work on how they

exacerbate social suffering (1997), he argues that "bureaucratic action repeatedly and systematically produces arbitrary outcomes in its provision of care" (2012: 6).

There might seem to be a contradiction between Gupta's scepticism about the efficacy of state intentions and his criticism of its failure to live up to them, but I resolve this with reference to Bhavani Raman's discussion of how "optimum conditions for the operation of abuses" can operate *through* "a moral discourse on corruption" (2012: 17). In her work on the British East India Company's administrative offices in the Madras Presidency, she describes how "absolute faith in paternal governance fashioned under Company rule" produced a "power-laden world of documentary transactions", along with a "burgeoning document bazaar" (ibid: 18). Like Gupta, Raman draws upon work on the subversive potential of paper and signature, but she is also attuned to how legal protocols that underwrite the modern state are constituted through "contradictions inherent in the moral claim of paper procedure" (ibid). That is, contradictions between rule and discretion, public office and private gain, which she describes as both the "central problematic for the colonial state" *and* as "central to its making" (ibid). Drawing upon media theorist Cornelia Vismann's work on the relationship between law and writing (Vismann 2008), Raman describes files as "variables that control the formalization and differentiation of the law" (2012: 3). Rather than stabilizing the contradictions of rules, they are said to generate domains for all kinds of transactions at the margins of the documentary state.

The insurrectionary possibilities of writing

In thinking about where human agency lies within this schema, I draw upon Judith Butler's work on discursive agency and implicit censorship, in which she both emphasises that "speech is always in some ways out of our control" (1997: 15), and that censorship "precedes the text (by which I include "speech" and other cultural expressions), and is in some sense responsible for its production" (ibid: 128). Both assumptions are premised in a

post-sovereign view of agency, in which it is not the property of the subject "but an effect of power", and therefore constrained but not determined in advance (ibid: 139). Butler uses the Derridean concept of the break that occurs when speech is taken out of context in utterance to locate in the gap between redundancy and repetition of reiteration the space of agency (ibid: 129). This would encompass "impossible speech", the ramblings and rantings of the asocial and the psychotic, which haunt the rules that govern speakablity (ibid: 133). But it also includes "the political promise of the performative" (ibid: 161), "the insurrectionary "force" of censored speech as it emerges into "official discourse" and opens the performative to an unpredictable future" (ibid: 142).

The political potential of the open temporality of the performative is certainly an important aspect of this project, but I have come to reflect on how this potential is also located in the past and the virtual, both of which are perhaps more easily accessed by what Goody describes as the "technology of writing" (2000). That is, writing's capacity to affect individual cognition and social organisation through its "storage capacities" and the interaction it produces "between the human mind and the written word, which is external to the actor in a way spoken language is not" (ibid: 144-145). Although, proceeding from the different understanding of technology outlined in the previous section, I stop short of arguing that it inevitably leads to scientific and systematic thinking, to 'rationality' or the "domestication of the savage mind" (Goody 1973: 7).

I therefore supplement this with the keener sense of the significance of the written word expressed by Rancière's analogous concept of "literarity" (2004 and also 2011b, where it is translated as "literariness"). Whereas, on the one hand, Butler seems to conflate text, speech and "cultural expression", and on the other, to counterpoise bodily "excess" to the force of habitus (Butler 1997: 155), Rancière speaks of the disordering of hierarchy particular to *writing*:

> By confusing the destination of living speech, writing confuses this relationship between ways of doing, ways of being and ways of speaking whose harmony constitutes, according to Plato, the community animated by its living soul.
> (2004: 103)

Rather than being a "'secondary modeling system', dependent on a prior system, spoken language", as Ong expresses it in his work on the relationship between orality and literacy (1982: 8), writing has "insurrectionary" possibilities. The "community of readers" is said to be "a community without legitimacy, a community formed only by the random circulation of the written word" (Rancière 2011c: 14). Literary 'intransitivity' is set apart from all the transmitter-message-receiver models of communication in which a message leaves "the proper transmitter and goes to the proper receiver by the proper channel" (ibid: 55). The groupings which emerge from this circulation also differ from Anderson's imagined communities not just in their 'illegitimacy', but in the indifference to market logics (print-capitalism) demonstrated by the randomness of their organization and the openness to appropriation of the texts around which they momentarily coalesce. Rancière proposes the *alienability* of the written word as a basis for the formation of community:

> To put it very crudely, you cannot lay your hands on capital like you can lay your hands on the written word. The play of language without hierarchy that violates an order based on the hierarchy of language is something completely different than the simple fact that a euro is worth a euro and that two commodities that are worth a euro are equivalent to one another. It is a matter of knowing if absolutely anyone can take over and redirect the power invested in language.
> (2011c: 55)

Both Rancière and Butler refer to the example of Rosa Parks's violation of racial segregation laws in the US as an illustration of how the insurrectionary possibilities of speech/writing might work in practice (Butler 1997: 147; Rancière 2006b: 61), thereby linking it to social *recomposition* rather than reproduction. Butler emphasises that Rosa Parks had no prior right to sit at the front of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, but that through the act of doing so "she endowed a certain authority to the act, and began the insurrectionary process of overthrowing those established codes of legitimacy" (1997: 147). Likewise, Rancière describes Parks's actions as reclamation of the rights of which she had

been deprived, and as therefore exemplary of the double manoeuvre of the democratic process. That is, "the action of subjects who, by working the interval between identities, reconfigure the distinction between the public and the private, the universal and the particular" (Rancière 2006b: 61-62). Again and again in this thesis, we will see individuals and groups who attempt this manoeuvre, who do not just 'perform' the identity allotted to them but overstep its 'given' boundaries and lay claim to a right to intervene in the affairs of the community.

Rancière develops his arguments on literarity in the context of 'democratic' forms of writing emerging in nineteenth century France, and *Madame Bovary* seems to be something of a key text for him. Flaubert's decision to confer as much importance to the adultery committed by a farmer's daughter as the heroic actions of "great men", is said to be in harmony with the fact that, when the novel was written, "nearly everyone" knew how to read and could make the fictitious life of Emma Bovary their own through "the egalitarian circulation of writing" 2011c: 55). It could be argued that this concept is inapplicable to India, given the continued inegalitarian distribution of literacy in that country (marked discrepancies between male-female and urban-rural literacy rates that continue to be a feature of Indian censuses). This criticism has also been levelled at *Imagined Communities*, whose theory of print-capitalism is said to fail to apply to Anderson's main fieldsite of Indonesia, where nationalism arose during a time when "most Indonesians were illiterate and beyond the effective reach of print media" (Hobart 2013: 515).

Regarding the question of elitism and bias in focusing on printed material, it can be countered that, unlike many other places in the world, print continues to be a significant medium in India, as has been documented by Jeffrey (2000) and Ninan (2007), who argue that this is largely a result of increased literacy and political awareness in mofussil and rural India. Moreover, from colonial attempts to regulate, monitor and control the contents of print media, it would seem that print was significant even during periods when literacy rates

were very low. In *Empire and Information*, Christopher Bayly accounts for this by describing eighteenth and early nineteenth century north India as "a 'literacy aware' society, if not a highly literate one" (2007: 39). Although literacy rates may have been low by European or East Asian standards, "illiteracy" did not preclude "sophistication in using others' learning" (ibid: 38). Most north Indians had access to literate people and knew "the meaning and power of writing" (ibid: 36). This "talkative, knowing society, highly competitive about the use and diffusion of information" is said to have been hard for any government to dominate (ibid: 40).

This may sound romantic but Akhil Gupta describes a similar scenario in his work on bureaucracy, structural violence and poverty in twenty-first century India (2012), in which he stresses the centrality of writing in shaping the state, but rejects both developmental faith in literacy as a tool of emancipation and the view of it as an instrument of domination, and argues that the relationship between literacy and orality is one of "radical contingency", with there being no necessary relationship between literacy and "reliable communication, democratic participation, or subaltern empowerment" (ibid: 197). Poor people are said to suffer from lack of assets and services that might enable them to survive rather than inability to read the writings of state officials (ibid: 208). At the same time, bureaucrats are accountable to elected officials, some of whom are "barely literate" (ibid: 200). Their very emphasis on writing can also be combated by mimicry and subversion (ibid: 232) and through what Gupta describes as "the political potential of counterfeit writing" (ibid: 226-231). Television and new telecommunications technologies are said to have further opened-up avenues for subaltern peoples to put pressure on bureaucrats (ibid: 232). My thesis deals with how this "radical contingency" worked across the colonial and post-colonial period, with special focus on Urdu. What Kaviraj, referring to Sanskrit, has described as "the mysterious process by which a high literature which they would never be able to read nonetheless confers an identity on the illiterate" (1992: 43), by now also applies to Urdu.

Many of its designated 'mother tongue' speakers, in both India and Pakistan, are unable to read it in the Perso-Arabic script in which it is most commonly written.

All of the above suggests that literacy exists on a sliding scale rather than as an absolute value. This is perhaps especially clear in a multilingual context such as India where two major religions – Hinduism and Islam – have a more complex understanding of the relationship between the spoken and written word. But it is also a feature of other periods, regions and religious traditions. In her work on everyday literacy in Africa, Karin Barber usefully describes literacy as a "vector" rather than a "fixed attribute" of a particular social class or segment of society (2006: 5). Thinking of literacy in this way undercuts the cliché that Hindi is the preserve of Hindus and Urdu the language of Muslims, by including all those involved in production and consumption of various media in these languages. Because of the novelty of these ascriptions, Hindi and Urdu also offer good case studies of how these labels come to be applied and to stick.

Methodology and chapter plan

I did fieldwork and archival research over more than two years in total between August 2010 and September 2014. The themes I have been concerned with remained constant, but perspectives and methodologies shifted as I learned more about my topic, and moved from a Politics department to a multi-disciplinary Study of Religions department, whilst teaching courses in social and anthropological theory. Working at the interstices of two fields (anthropology and religions), which have different and sometimes even opposed understandings of the significance of texts, I found myself reflecting on the relationship between orality and literacy, and accordingly incorporating a stronger theoretical component into my work. By now this is essentially a thesis in the field of social and political theory, in which the empirical material on India works out the theoretical arguments

advanced. Throughout I have remained focused on what could be described as 'political communication' – attempts to articulate constituencies through communicative practices – even whilst coming to eschew the cybernetic (Deutsch 1963 and 1966) and mass communications (Shannon 1998) models often used to understand this process by political scientists.

I did my first period of fieldwork and archival research in Delhi and Lucknow between August 2010 and September 2011. At this stage my project was focused on Urdu newspapers, and I spent this time looking at Urdu language policy and print media. When dealing with media production, the impediments and instruments that enable communication are particularly obvious, and this was one of the reasons why I wanted to study media, because of the opportunity it would afford to "study sideways" (Hannerz 1998), to deal with people whose position and task is analogous to that of a researcher. When looking for examples of such work I came across Ursula Rao's anthropological studies of Hindi and English newspaper offices in Lucknow (2006, 2010). Rao claims that she never felt that she knew more than or knew things in a radically different way from her subjects, and this sets her apart from Köpping's theories about how transgressive ethnographic research transforms perspective through inculcation of an emic point of view (Köpping 2002). For her, the emic/etic distinction, based in the notion of bounded cultural units, did not seem to apply, and this seems partly to be a result of her decision to focus on media rather than one such unit. Always identifiable as an outsider (a foreigner, a woman, a non-native speaker of Hindi-Urdu and a first language speaker of English), I at times experienced a similar convergence of perspectives during the course of conversations and interviews.

Some of the most productive of these were to inform my theoretical reflections. Early on in my research, Abid Suhail, a senior journalist whom I interviewed in Lucknow, spoke to me of "the complete newspaper":

> No newspaper can become a complete newspaper, but no newspaper has a right to call itself a respectable daily without trying to become a complete newspaper. A complete newspaper

> must provide all important news from the region, then the country, then of the world. There is a perpetual conflict in the daily newspaper between the regional, national and international. Suppose a government is overthrown in UP and on the same day the USA attacks Baghdad. There will be a conflict. On that day Baghdad will be close to Lucknow because of our Muslim heritage and foreign policy. The defeat of the state government is also of great importance. One of these stories will be first lead. But there is a method to make the first page in such a way that both stories draw almost equal attention without disturbing the make-up of the page.[2]

Suhail acknowledged that this was an "ideal which is never achieved", but still regretted that contemporary Urdu newspapers continued to make up their pages in a "random" manner. He spoke of a time when the first page of a newspaper was made by the chief sub-editor himself, who would both decide the chief story and its layout. Now it is the compositor who decides, he complained, and greater emphasis is laid on filling space than careful composition of a newspaper. One finds two related stories at a distance from one another on the first page; continuity errors in run-on stories; inconsistent localization of the various editions of a newspaper; information that should be in the introduction crammed into a subheading; lack of immediate relevance in the selection of editorials; and so on.

He partly attributed this to the impact of television upon the production, contents and layout of Indian newspapers. Previously, dailies used to be produced in three shifts: morning, mid-day and night. Now there was only one shift from 5pm to midnight, and newspapers had a tendency to follow the lead of television in selecting major news items. Even though journalism is "a craft of direct expression", an "element of ornamentation" had been introduced in order to counter the effects of TV. Through these statements he touched upon the corollary of Latour's assertion that society does not exist, that it needs to be *made* to exist through technical instruments, which are "means and ends at the same time", and therefore capable of bearing upon the wider social fabric (Latour 1994: 53). Hence the adverse effects of television on the cycle of newspaper production. But in describing how the impossibility of these ideals of 'direct expression' and 'completion' paradoxically set the

[2] Interview with Abid Suhail, Lucknow, 7 December 2010.

process in motion, he also went beyond a normative understanding of the necessity of 'transparency' and 'balance'.

Seeing how state, market and political party pressure affected newspaper content also sensitised me to the 'quirks' of the Indian newspaper market, its lack of adherence to the notion of print-capitalism in both its multilingual content and business model. Pressures from various directions, an Urdu newspaper editor informed me, mean that it is not possible for a daily paper to function as a "machine", a vehicle for a single ideology, agent or party.[3] This was said to contrast with weeklies such as the Jammat-i-Islami's *Dawat*, which are cheaper and easier to produce, and more didactic in tone. These socio-material constraints also did not seem to work in a straightforward way. Conversations with senior journalists who had experienced both colonial repression and the Indian emergency of 1975-77, made it clear that technological improvements and absence of strict censorship laws did not inevitably lead to a freer press. Rather, the previously slow and cumbersome nature of Urdu press production in particular seems to have restricted state oversight and control of newspaper content. This encouraged me to consider the significance of gaps and breaks, moments and spaces in which communication networks change pace, scatter and terminate, to reflect on the productive effects of these, and on how 'the people' are rearticulated during 'special' periods.

I returned to Delhi between May and September 2013 to do archival research on censorship in general and the internal emergency of 1975-77 in particular. Learning about media reception during the emergency period, and thinking about the significance of Congress's defeat in the 1977 general election, held during the emergency itself, led me to consider tensions inherent in the idea of elections held in society and conducted by the state as free expression of the voice of the people. A further period of fieldwork occurred between December 2013 and May 2014, which I spent observing the Uttar Pradesh phase of

[3] Interview with Aman Abbas, Editor of *Sahafat*, Lucknow, 13 September 2011.

the Indian election. I returned to India between June and September 2014 to do follow-up interviews and archival research.

My research involved work in libraries, archives and research centres, government departments and newspaper offices. In Delhi I consulted the Central Secretariat Library, Jamia Millia University Library, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Library, the National Archives and the P.C. Joshi archive in Jawaharlal Nehru University, looking through material on central and UP State language and media policy, emergency-era censorship and its precedents, and electoral regulation. I also consulted the archives of Hindi and Urdu newspaper offices in Delhi, Lucknow, Meerut and Muzaffarnagar: *Aag*, *Inquilab*, *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* and *Sahafat* (Urdu); *Amar Ujala, Dainik Jagran*, *Rashtriya Sahara* and *Shah Times* (Hindi). When in London this was supplemented by material in the British Library and the SOAS library. Whilst in India, I conducted 94 semi-structured interviews in Hindi-Urdu and English with people involved in public communication: newspaper editors, journalists, advertising agents, government officials, politicians and party workers, religious professionals and social workers. I also spent time in newspaper, NGO and government offices, political party offices, places of worship, in schools, colleges, shops, private homes and on the street, getting a sense of everyday communication practices.

This research was not done with the intention to get a holistic picture of a pre-existent field, nor to read actual practices against unrealistic policies, but in order to capture the mutually constitutive relations between different elements. Likewise, the topics I cover may be presented in roughly chronological order, but they are not intended to provide an overview of a century of Indian political history. I have selected these examples because they illuminate a different aspect of mediation at a particular time.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Each chapter deals with state and 'elite' attempts at the discursive construction of 'the people' through some or other state of exception: during wartime, emergencies and elections and through a 'special' language,

which flouts most of the criteria for official language status. In this way I hope to cover both critical events and the workings of the everyday state, through exceptional cases which throw intro relief general patterns. The first chapter, “The immense writing-machine and the reading public”, looks at the effects of local and central state language and media policy in post-Independence India, through the prism of Urdu language and print media, with focus on its former heartland, the State of Uttar Pradesh. Despite marginalisation of Urdu and promotion of Hindi, the unofficial afterlife of spoken Hindi-Urdu evokes Hindustani, which encompasses both languages, and gradually disappeared from the census schedule as Hindi and Urdu became associated with Hindu and Muslim identity respectively. I look in detail at the incongruence of an apparent boom in Urdu newspapers accompanying a perceived decline in Urdu readerships, and Hindu nationalist support for a language by now associated with Muslims.

The second chapter, “Impossible speech”, builds upon the previous chapter’s discussion of Urdu to deal with the effects of state censorship on political communication in colonial and post-colonial India, with focus on moments when the writings of two Urdu journalist-editors, Abul Kalam Azad and Aziz Burney, were censored or censured. I trace the vestiges of a more encompassing notion of the ‘qaum’ (loosely translatable as ‘nation’) in the run-up to the Khilafat movement, and a narrower definition of it in a later period. In terms of media, this chapter deals with the intersection between the typed word and the printed image in Abul Kalam Azad’s *al-Hilal* magazine and the relationship between print and electronic media in Burney’s writings.

The third chapter, “Emergency pedagogy”, picks up on the preceding discussion of censorship to look at the reception of the assassination of the President of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in emergency-era India, through the prison writings of opposition leaders J.P. Narayan and L.K. Advani. It deals with the themes of the diffusion of power and information, the autocratic legacies of the colonial state and oligarchic tendencies of all

states, through cross border dissemination and reception of an event that reawakens memories of previous forms of the nation. In terms of media, it considers the relationship between the written and spoken word in underground literature produced in India during the internal emergency of 1975-77.

The final chapter, "The Model Code of Conduct and the scandal of democracy", brings to a culmination the preceding discussion of the technical mediation of 'the people', by looking at attempts to regulate public speech during Indian elections, through imposition of a special electoral time, when many kinds of political activity are restricted. It looks at how the election office's preoccupation with print, public spaces and official election periods, left it unable to span the informal spaces, unofficial periods and mix of old and new media forms in which the BJP's election campaign was conducted.

By looking at the effects of state attempts to regulate communication during special periods and through an 'exceptional' language, I highlight the slippages between its central and local levels, the incoherence of its policies and the unfaithful nature of their implementation by state functionaries. Through close reading of 'elite' communications (the words of politicians, journalists and bureaucrats), I deal with the gap between speech and utterance, and the techno-material constraints through which it is shaped. By paying attention to how these state and 'elite' messages are disseminated and received, I suggest the presence of a subject that exceeds any pre-formatted outline of 'the people'.

Chapter one: The immense writing-machine and the reading public

Writing in 1853, on the occasion of a debate on renewal of the East India Company's rule over India's territories, Marx noted the absurdity of a senate ruling more than 156 million people, putting its heads together to ask, who is the governing power in India? On looking deeply into "the framework of this anomalous government" he identified "a third power", supreme but hidden from public view, the two thousand stockholders who had no interest in India other than securing dividends on their revenue (2011: 34). The men elected from this pool being unfit for their duties, the real government was said to consist of "the permanent and irresponsible *bureaucracy*" who had transformed it into "one immense writing-machine" (ibid: 34-35). The combination of automation and inscription suggested by this image looks forward to the fragment on machines in *The Grundrisse*, in which the automaton, "a moving power that moves itself", is said to supplant the worker (1973: 693). Unlike the instrument, which the worker "animates and makes into his organ with his own skill and strength", the machine "is itself the virtuoso":

> The science which compels the inanimate limbs of the machinery, by their construction, to act purposefully, as an automaton, does not exist in the worker's consciousness, but rather acts upon him through the machine as an alien power, as the power of the machine itself. (ibid.)

Both the article on India and the text on automation contain the suggestion of a blurring of boundaries between humans and non-humans, which renders human labour and the typically human task of inscription 'mindless'. As discussed in the introduction, Agamben expresses similar anxieties about the dehumanising effects of the 'apparatus', but the process described by Marx is arguably stronger and stranger. De-centring the subject of these operations makes it hard to ascribe authorship for actions and to assign responsibility for their consequences. Although, in India, there is "a financial deficit", an "over-supply of wars", "no supply at all of public works", abominable systems of tax, justice and law, he observes, no party is held responsible for any of this (2011: 31).

In this chapter I pick up on a post-sovereign understanding of agency suggested by this image, to oppose an Althusserian theory of the 'state apparatus': a model of state-society relations in which the former is portrayed as "a 'cold monster' imposing its rigid order on the life of society" (Rancière 1998: 29) through repressive and/or ideological means (Althusser 1977a). Working from the alternative concepts of the dispositif of state and the insurrectionary possibilities of writing, outlined in the introduction, I look at the state's own writing practices to question the coherence of its policies and argue against understandings of social group formation that view language as a fixed marker of difference pertaining to objectively definable social groups, with specific reference to the ambiguous status and fluctuating fortunes of Urdu in post-Independence India.

Although historically and politically informed approaches now predominate in the literature on nationalism and ethnicity, even accounts which emphasise the role of political and economic interests, and of the modern nation-state, continue to work within the primordialist framework of the "givens" of social existence, as anthropologist Clifford Geertz puts it in an article on the conflict between primordial sentiments and civil politics in "new states", which gained independence following World War Two (1963: 109). He enumerates these as "*Assumed Blood Ties*", "*Race*", "*Language*", "*Region*", "*Religion*" and "*Custom*", and claims that in "modernizing societies" they are the "preferred bases for the demarcation of autonomous political units" (ibid: 110). This is said to result in a tension between "the gross actualities of blood, race, language, locality, religion, or tradition" and "the steadily accelerating importance in this century of the sovereign state as a positive instrument for the realization of collective aims" (ibid: 108). So as well as being based in a primordial understanding of the significance of race, religion, language etc. Geertz's assertion is based in a view of state and society as discrete and possibly antagonistic entities, the former perpetually threatened by more profound and ancient ties rooted in the latter, especially in

non-Western societies upon which novel forms of the state are said to have been awkwardly superimposed.

Geertz wrote his essay in the wake of reorganization of Indian states on linguistic lines, and describes this political decision as an outbreak of "linguism", a form of primordialism said to be "particularly intense in the Indian subcontinent" (ibid: 112). In the event, creation of linguistic states in 1956 did not lead to dissolution of the union, and has even been cited as a factor in India's continued unity and the success of its democracy, an early instance of how an identity-based conflict was successfully defused by political engineering; so-called natural and spiritual affinities successfully reduced to the level of civil politics, states re-moulded to accommodate societal identities. According to Paul Brass linguistic states helped foster "a sense of multilayered nationality", whereby it was possible for Indians to think of themselves as members of two nations: "a Sikh, Bengal, or Tamil nation at one level of identity and an Indian nation at another", and thereby helped to maintain the integrity of India (Brass 1988: 170). This perspective departs from primordialism's fatalism in arguing that these attachments can be used and adapted by states to further their nation-building and modernising agendas. It also allows that states and societies can cross-influence each other. But it continues to view ethnicity and nationality as objective and potentially conflictive attachments, and to think of states and societies as discrete entities.

Both of these notions are belied by the histories of Hindi and Urdu: congeries of languages known by many names and written in a number of scripts coalescing and then dividing into Hindi and Urdu over the course of the nineteenth century and coming to be conflated with Hindus and Muslims respectively by the twentieth, with Urdu consequently falling into decline in India, going from its nineteenth century status as the link language of a multi-religious elite, the pre-eminent language for print media at that time, to its current day

reputation as the language of lower-middle-class Muslims, its written form the preserve of the Madrassa educated, its press, a minority concern reliant on government subsidies.

In post-Independence India, the cliché Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim has been further undone by marginalisation of Urdu and promotion of Hindi meaning that many Muslims are unable to read Urdu but can read Hindi, if they can read any language at all. At the same time, remembering the history of Urdu (language of the court and the trans-denominational groups associated with it), and also bearing in mind that many of these new readers are only first or second generation literate, it is hard to say that they have 'lost' the ability to read Urdu. Indeed, it is arguable that as literacy per se has increased the total number of people reading Urdu in India has also increased concomitant with its diminished official status, although because Indian censuses do not record which language respondents are literate in this is hard to verify. The unverifiable but highly probable fact that most recorded speakers of Urdu are Muslim also makes it hard to talk of any decline in the language's political significance.

Through the prism of Urdu, a 'vernacular' language that spans regions and nations, I hope to extend my arguments about the dispositif of state, by looking at the practices and associations, as well as the ideologies and instrumental rationalities, which influence its linguistic policy. Such a perspective does not seek to downplay the significance of power dynamics and the ideas and intentions of actors. Rather, it encourages closer attention to how they become effective in specific contexts, and broader reflection on the relationship between post-Independence linguistic, education and media policy, and the multiple readerships for Indian newspapers, incompletely distinguished by language, region and religion.

Thinking along these lines, remembering that reading is both an individual activity and a social one, the surrounding circumstances to a reading also include those in which literacy is acquired, and in multilingual so-called 'new states' such as India this firstly

involves whether literacy is acquired at all, and secondly in which languages it is acquired. State policy and economic conditions are obviously key factors here, but they do not work singly or in a singular fashion. Some of the most insightful studies of literacy and language acquisition in multi-lingual postcolonial states attempt to go beyond economic determinism and a state-centric focus to produce more subtle analyses of literacy acquisition and language outcomes.

In *The Child and the State in India*, for instance, Myron Weiner attributes India's poor record in achieving universal literacy to the prejudice held by bureaucrats, social workers and activists alike that certain people are born to do certain jobs, a prejudice that often is not expressed or even consciously held (1991). Weiner describes India as "the largest single producer of the world's illiterates" and discounts an economic explanation for the fact as many African countries "with income levels lower than India have expanded mass education with impressive increases in literacy" (ibid: 4). He attributes this to a casteist and classist variant of the mind/body and labour/cognition divide. Middle class Indians are said to "conceptualize a distinction between children of the poor and their own children…between children as "hands" and children as "minds"; that is, between the child who must be taught to "work" and the child who must be taught to "learn", the acquisition of manual skills as distinct from cognitive skills" (ibid: 188). With regards to language acquisition, David Laitin in *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* adapts game theory and Indian language policy to encompass both micro level choices and macro level determinants, set against a backdrop of historical context and motored by instrumental rationality, in his three plus/minus one language formula for determining language outcomes (1992). These books acknowledge the importance of state institutions whilst remaining sensitive to how they are informed by ideologies and work through the individuals who run them and make language and educational choices.

In keeping with the multi-scale perspective of such work, but departing from it in not separating power, action and belief (Law 1986), singling out a *single* factor (ideologies *or* interests *rather than* income level) and relegating others to context (historical *background*), I will look at the current day significance of Urdu in light of the effective history of the Hindi-Urdu controversy. Rather than presenting an overview of the topic I am proposing a shift in focus induced by a "filled out" (Latour 1991a) understanding of literacy, derived from concepts such as literacy awareness (Bayly 2007) and literacy as a vector (Barber 2006). This understanding can usefully be extended to encompass language acquisition, and in the case of Hindi and Urdu this is further justified by the fact that by now the main difference between the two languages lies in their scripts, being virtually indistinguishable at the everyday spoken level. As a result, many Indians of various faiths are aware of Urdu, appreciate the language and its literature and even define themselves as Urdu speakers, whilst being unable to read it in Nastaliq, the Perso-Arabic script in which it is now most commonly written.

I will look at how Urdu's historical status as a link language works out in the post-Independence period through three case studies spanning the areas of language policy, party politics and market forces. Through these cases I will demonstrate how on the ground, history and policy combine to inform practices that do not quite adhere to the letter of various 'laws': of the state, of ascriptive attachments, of supply-and-demand. In the first section I will look at the convolutions of language policy nationally and in the State of UP, where post-Partition Urdu has been marginalised in education and bureaucracy despite constitutional and central government level safeguards for minority languages. In the second, the paradox of the Jana Sangh, and its successor, the Bharatiya Janata Party's at times avowedly pro-Urdu platform. Finally, I will consider the Urdu newspaper market, which, despite the apparent declining significance of Urdu as a language, continues to expand, largely as a result of indirect state support. Proceeding from the concept of techno-politics

outlined in the introduction, this chapter attempts to go beyond pointing out obvious inconsistencies to understand how various factors work together to produce these apparently arbitrary outcomes.

Split publics, forked tongues

Over the years pro-Urdu measures by political parties and governments have been a standard way of dealing with Muslim voters, although the way this works can be paradoxical. On the one hand Hindu nationalist organisations have continued to play a role in the marginalisation of Urdu. At the same time the BJP's origins in north India ('Cow-belt' *and* Hindi-Urdu heartland) and a section of its leadership's appreciation for Urdu and its associated culture mean that a kind of 'soft corner' for the language exists within its ranks. Even more significant is the presence of certain concentrations of Muslim voters in particular regions and nationally. In this section I will look at how Urdu's historical status as a link language works out in the contemporary period through the convolutions of the Jana Sangh, and its successor, the BJP's Urdu policy. Apparent Hindu nationalist support for a language by now associated with Muslims would seem to be un-anticipated by theories of multisymbol congruence and symbolic power, premised in the idea of 'objective' differences between ethnic groups and social classes, and therefore highlights how the multivalence of symbols can work to bring together disparate elements as well as manipulated to separate them.

The 1951 Jana Sangh manifesto does not mention language policy, but the one which followed it in 1954 promises to introduce Hindi as a national language, whilst encouraging the development of "regional languages", with the proviso that they accept Devanagari script and a common scientific and technical vocabulary based on Sanskrit to further "the growth of national solidarity and goodwill" (BJS 2005: 280). But it does not recognise English and Urdu as national languages, and promises to remove Urdu from the

list of languages recognised in the Constitution. It also pointedly declares that "Hindi will be secured its rightful place in Jammu and Kashmir" (ibid: 281). This attitude towards Urdu was to remain largely unchanged in the 1950s and 1960s, but a mellowing in attitude is discernible in the 1971 manifesto. A section titled "Developing Indian Languages" proclaims that "*Swarajya* is incomplete without *Swabhasha*" ("self-rule" and an "autonomous language") and promises to "expedite the replacement of English by Indian languages at the State level" and develop Hindi as a link language (ibid: 171). But it also promises to "pay attention to the promotion of the Urdu language, and ensure that facilities due to it under the law are accorded to it", whilst being opposed to making it the second official language of U.P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh (ibid: 172). The last comment is a response to pro-Urdu agitations that took place around the time of the 1967 elections, during which second language status for Urdu came to be the plank of several political parties. This movement gained impetus from non-Hindi States' success in pushing for amendment of *The Official Languages Act* in 1967, affirming the use of English as an associate official language. Although the Jana Sangh had expressed vocal resistance to the amendment, it ultimately agreed to it out of a concern to extend its national support-base into areas such as the Punjab, where it had a relationship with the Akali Dal, and Kerala, where it had been making some headway (Das Gupta 1970: 258).

Congress fragmentation was an important factor in these developments. Congress had won a slender majority in the 1967 general election, but failed to secure an outright majority in a number of States, leading to the formation of Samyukta Vidhayak Dal governments in north India. These consisted of broad-based coalitions between Jana Sangh and other parties, including, in Bihar, the Communist Party of India. These volatile combinations showed early signs of strain, and Congress would return to something approaching its former stature in the 1971 election. But these forces would reunite during the emergency period, go on to form the Janata Party and contest and win the 1977 election.

The 1977 Janata Party manifesto states that it will implement the three-language formula and protect the rights of linguistic minorities, and accord “due importance and encouragement” to Urdu and Sindhi (BJS 2005: 139). Urdu and Sindhi are non-regional languages mostly spoken by Muslims and displaced Hindus from Sindh, so this was a carefully balanced combination. This was toughened-up in the 1980 manifesto, in response to doubts about the secularism of the Janata Party given its incorporation of the Jana Sangh party and members of the Hindu nationalist paramilitary organisation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). This document mentions its commitment to implementation of the recommendations of the *Gujral Committee Report,* and to the Urdu language generally “which originated in India, and whose contribution to the country’s literature and culture has been immense”, with special provisions for Urdu as a medium of instruction for Urdu-speaking children “wherever there is adequate demand” (BJS 2005: 95-96).

The coalition was soon to come unstuck, leading to the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party in 1980. The BJP’s stance towards Urdu hardened during this decade, a period of increased communalisation of Indian politics, and the BJP strongly opposed moves to make Urdu second state language of UP in 1989. BJP state President Kalyan Singh threatened a "violent and gigantic" agitation in response, sentiments reportedly “echoed” by party leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee and manifested in a gathering of more than 250 Shiv Sena men “brandishing spears and trishuls” outside the Vidhan Sabha (legislative assembly) building in Lucknow (Awasthi 1989). The BJP Manifesto for that year also mentions the Act in a list of examples of Congress appeasement of Muslims:

> By negativing [sic] the Supreme Court judgment in the Shah Bano case, the government has put a premium on communalism and obscurantism. And by recognizing Urdu as second official language in Uttar Pradesh on election eve, it has shown more interest in Muslim votes than in Urdu language. In the process it has only given the country so many corpses. By not allowing the rebuilding of the Ram Janma Mandir in Ayodhya, on the lines of the Somnath Mandir build by the Government of India in 1948, it has allowed tensions to rise, and gravely strained social harmony.
> (BJP 2005: 358)

The abrupt transition from Urdu to Ayodhya indicates how language and religion were connected in Hindu nationalist thinking (any corpses that year would have more likely related to the Ram Mandir than *The Uttar Pradesh Official Language Amendment Act*). However, even in this year, in the section on language, there is a promise to assist in the development of Indian languages "which are neither State languages nor regional languages, but have contributed to the enrichment of Indian culture" (ibid: 384). This could mean Sindhi and Sanskrit, but both these languages are explicitly mentioned elsewhere (ibid: 378 and 384) and the wording is left vague enough to include Urdu.

There is no direct reference to Urdu in the 1991 and 1996 manifestos, but there is a notable use of Urdu in the latter's description of Congress misrule:

> never since the scourge of the Pindaries [mercenaries, often Muslim, who were active in the Maratha region] has the writ of our state been as enfeebled as by this Congress misrule. The primary task, therefore, is to restore to the state, and to governance, its honour and prestige – *izzat* and *iqbal*.
> (BJP 2005: 250)

On the one hand there is a reference to Muslim treachery and on the other a use of Urdu words to express noble sentiments. Both were the legacy of centuries of Muslim rulers in India, who left a corpus of political heroes/villains and Arabic, Persian and Turkic words, many of which relate to politics. Controversial 'Muslim' figures such as the Pindaris, who have been depicted as both marauders and heroes of anti-British struggle, exemplify Brass's critique of Cohn's theory of the parallel development of regional and all-India "symbol pools" (Cohn 1966). The former are said to encompass figures such as the Maratha king Shivaji and the latter languages such as Urdu and Sanskrit and lifestyles such as the courtly-Persian and Brahmanic. But, as Brass points out, "regional and national symbols are frequently in conflict and…many all-India symbols are competitive" (1974: 139), not least all-India Urdu and regional Hindi.

Nineteen ninety-six was also the year that saw the formation of an abortive BJP government. When the BJP returned to power in 1998, with a coalition of smaller and

regional parties in the National Democratic Alliance, its official policy towards Urdu had cooled to carefully balanced and rather vague statements about encouraging "the enrichment, preservation and development of all Indian languages, including Sanskrit and Urdu" (BJP 2005: 182). This document also mentions the diversity that is "an inseparable part of India's past and present national tradition", which comprises not only the Hindu holy books but "also the Indian traditions of the Muslims, Christians and Parsis" (ibid: 142). This exists alongside sections on "the cultural nationalism of India which is the core of Hindutva", and the "integrative" ideas which led it to support the Ram Janambhoomi movement (ibid: 146). But even the tone of these statements is markedly different from that of earlier manifestoes. When elections were called the following year after the Tamil All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's exit from the coalition, there is no mention of Hindutva in the 1998 National Democratic Alliance (NDA) manifesto. There is even very little mention of the BJP. All emphasis is on the new coalition, as the NDA mission statement proclaims: "The NDA is new, the NDA is the future and the NDA is a broad-based movement for progress and justice" (ibid: 122).

By the time of the next polls in 2004 the BJP had been holding power across India and at the centre in a coalition government for five years, and needed to take into account other parties, Muslim voters and a general distaste for blatant communalism after over a decade of riots and violence reaching its apogee in the Gujarat pogrom. The sitting BJP Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was himself seen as an embodiment of composite Indian culture, socially comfortable around Muslims, product and proponent of 'ganga-yamuni tehzeeb', even a Hindustani poet of sorts. It was during his term in office and just prior to the Lok Sabha elections that a series of 'pro-Urdu' measures were announced. Notably Vajpayee's 2004 promise to recruit 200,000 Urdu teachers and spend Rs 740 million on madrassa education. This, again, reinforces the conflation between Urdu, Muslims and a particular type of religious education, and was opposed on this account by some Muslim

public figures. Ather Farouqui, for example, has dismissed it as "unconstitutional" (from personal communication with Ather Farouqui).

The move was condemned by the VHP as "an insulting slap to all Hindus, Christians and others" – but both the proposal and the VHP's careful reference to "Christians and others" in its critique of it, mark a shift from the harder-edged rhetoric of earlier periods, including that expressed by Vajpayee himself.[4] Just two years earlier, in 2002, on the eve of the burning of the Sabarmati Express, the ostensible trigger for the Gujarat pogrom of that year, he had proclaimed that the BJP could win the upcoming UP Assembly elections without Muslim support.[5] The menace in this statement was underlined by events that were to unfold a few days later. However, Vaypayee's comments also suggest that demography is not destiny. The proportion of Muslim voters being unlikely to have changed significantly during this time, a roughly similar number was being addressed quite differently over a two-year period.

How to understand these sudden shifts and apparent incongruities? You could argue that they result from deficiencies in Indian democracy which have created "an incompletely modern polity" with a "split public" sphere, in which there is a divide between the political society desired by modernizing elites and "its actual historical forms", a central fault line being the "the unfulfilled mission of secularism" in a country where a compromise between Hindu orthodoxy and progressive nationalism launched an anti-colonial independence movement, culminating in creation of a secular state (Rajagopal 2001: 152). The emergence and success of the Hindu nationalist BJP in an avowedly secular country would be proof of such a split, as would its double discourse on Muslims.

Setting aside for a moment the sincerity or otherwise of their intentions, and thinking about the idea of secularism implicit in these gestures, for whatever reason, the BJP

[4] "VHP flays Vajpayee on support to Urdu, madrasas", *The Times of India* 23 April 2004: http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2004-04-23/india/28324162_1_madrasas-urdu-general-secretary-praveen-togadia (accessed 21/06/2012).

[5] "BJP can win even without Muslim votes: PM", *The Hindu* 20 February 2002: http://hindu.com/thehindu/2002/02/20/stories/2002022003000100.htm (accessed 21/06/2012).

was seeking to demonstrate its secularism through this policy rather than gesture to the historical form of, say, a Hindu kingdom, and the VHP's critique was also ostensibly secular. Both the BJP and VHP allude to a view of secularism as a state of equilibrium between the faiths, only differing on how this balance should be maintained, the BJP seeming to think that it entails support for religious minorities, the VHP that it means not favouring one group above others. This understanding is by now commonplace and even said to be distinctively Indian, although something like it can be seen in other countries where the predominant religion does not support the separation of church and state because, like Hinduism, it has no church. This case of forked tongues and nuanced readings of doublespeak ventriloquizing a monolithic, Urdu-reading, Muslim vote bank and a view of secularism as interfaith equilibrium, suggests that polysemy is not the same as incoherence and multivalence does not inevitably result in fragmentation. It would seem that catchall categories and concepts (Urdu, secularism) can also work to momentarily coalesce groups.

Moving beyond the idea of consistency as a possibility in social life, through talk of fragments and margins, often negatives of the very notion of totality that it aims to critique through its flagging of exceptions, makes it possible to think in terms of kaleidoscopic configurations and to look at the different ways that such measures work within and across different levels. Without dismissing rumours of the divisive way it was to work locally, the fact that it was introduced prior to a general election encourages reflection on how it might work at the national level, where different elements come into play. Muslims who do not read Urdu or even speak Urdu, and who might prefer their children to be educated in English (or Hindi or Tamil), could still interpret pro-Urdu measures as signalling that a party is attuned to their presence. This is to say nothing of how they might be aimed at and received by non-Muslims – Christians, Buddhists etc. and Hindus too, an attachment to secular values, however defined, not being exclusive to religious minorities.

A decade later, during the 2014 general election, a non-Muslim audience seemed to be implicit for measures listed in the section on equal opportunities for minorities, which included a commitment to "preservation and promotion of Urdu" (BJP 2014: 17). Pro-Urdu measures allowed the BJP to gesture towards secular ideals despite its controversial choice of leader. Narendra Modi may have been cleared by the Supreme Court for culpability in the 2002 Gujarat pogrom, but questions remained over his role in the violence. At the same time, adoption of Hindi allowed Modi, the first Chief Minister other than, briefly, Charan Singh (1979-80), to assume the position of Prime Minister, to counter charges of parochialism. Standing from Varanasi and speaking in Hindi allowed this Gujarati politician to lay claim to a regional identity now viewed as national: Hindu, Hindi-speaking, Hindustani, Banarasi, and to even parlay this into the international arena, delivering his first speech to the United General Assembly in Hindi.[6]

To mix metaphors, all of these ideological convolutions seem to be less indicative of elites rallying pre-constituted groups through an appeal to shared, 'given' characteristics, than parties semaphoring their intentions, voters reading and sometimes reading between the lines of these signals, and meanings being created through these circuits. Through such impure processes of semiosis, popularly known as 'dirty politics' or 'opportunism' ('gandi siyasat', 'mauqaparasti'), constituencies are continually being mediated.

Language recognition and misrecognition

Probably no census could capture the complexity of linguistic practices in India, but the three questions relating to them in the 2011 census form offer a particularly stark assessment of literacy and language.[7] Question ten asks for "Mother Tongue"; question

[6] "PM Modi's US visit: Modi follows footsteps of AB Vajpayee, speaks in Hindi at UN" in *The Economic Times*, 27 September 2014: http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-09-27/news/54377095_1_hindi-divas-prime-minister-narendra-modi-pm-modi (accessed 31/08/2015).
[7] http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-Schedule/Shedules/English_Household_schedule.pdf (accessed 15/03/2015).

eleven for “Other languages known” (a maximum of two can be listed) and question twelve for “Literacy status” – giving two options “Literate” or “Illiterate”. Categories such as Mother Tongue and Literate/Illiterate do not take into account how multiple languages/dialects can be spoken within a family, how and to what extent literacy has been acquired, and which language respondents are literate in. Only sixteen languages are listed on the census schedule, encompassing hundreds of “mother tongues”, a term which covers both dialects and languages.[8] Because the distinction between dialect and language is not self-evident, and mother tongue is no less contentious a term, schedule listing is fiercely contested and often quite arbitrary in practice.[9] Einar Haugen describes the terms as existing on a “continuum” rather than in “neat opposition” (1972: 237). The decisive movement from dialect to language is said to be brought about by selection, codification and community acceptance of a ‘norm’ rather than cut-and-dried linguistic differences, and to be closely related to the rise of nationalism. According to the indologist Sheldon Pollock, ‘mother tongue’ is an alien concept in South Asia, where multilingualism has historically been pervasive, and modern instances of linguism, manifested in creation of linguistic states, are “of entirely recent stamp and largely exogenous origin” (2006: 507).

This multilingualism is attested to by the profusion of terms deployed in colonial censuses to record spoken, as opposed to written, languages; variously, “mother tongue”, “parent tongue”, “language ordinarily used”, “language ordinarily spoken in the household” (Brass 1974: 193). In the 2011 census handbook enumerators are instructed to take its meaning literally, as “the language spoken in childhood by the person's mother to the person” (54).[10] This language may or may not have a script, and might not even be understood by the person it is spoken to, in the case of “infants and deaf mutes” and also,

[8] The examples of “Mother tongue” given in figures 6.55-6.58 of the enumerators handbook(Sadri, Hindi, Malayalam and Bhojpuri) encompass two dialects or “bolis” – Sadri and Bhojpuri, which are both classified as languages and mother tongues grouped under Hindi:
http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.aspx (accessed 16/03/2015).

[9] As exemplified by the failure of Maithili failure to make the list despite meeting all the criteria of a “language” rather than a dialect, as described in Brass (1974) and Burghart (1993).

[10] http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-Documents/Updating%20of%20Abridged%20Houselist-English.pdf (accessed 16/03/2015).

potentially, adults who are no longer conversant with it. All that is required is that their mother should have spoken it to them when they were a child, with the only exception being someone whose mother died in infancy. In such instances the language used in the person's childhood home is said to qualify. Both the category and its exception overlook multilingualism within the Indian family, where the language you speak with your mother could be different from that used to address your father, which could differ yet again from that spoken with siblings.

In the eyes of its critics simplifications are compounded by distortions as it is left to census workers to complete the form. Enumerators are instructed not to attribute religion on the basis of "caste names" and also not to establish any relationship between religion and mother tongue (ibid: 45). Enumerators who suspect that "due to any organised movement", religion is not being accurately recorded, are to record them as reported by the respondent and then make a report to their Supervisory Officer for verification (ibid). The presence of the interdiction and the attempt to monitor and counter it suggest that these practices may be quite common, as has historically been the case. According to Brass no census of Hindi and Urdu speakers in the north Indian states of UP and Bihar has ever accurately reflected the number and relative proportion of Hindi or Urdu speakers (1974: 190). Before 1951 the goal is said to have been subverted in practice because enumerators were told to record as mother tongue "something different from what they were told by the people" (ibid). (For example, with various languages/dialects grouped under the label "Hindustani".) Following partition, when Urdu became national language of Pakistan, Hindi the official national language of India (alongside English), and "Hindustani", which encompassed them both, gradually disappeared from the Indian census, they have been viewed with no less scepticism.

Although Hindustani lost official language status following Independence, it continued to be a census category until a sharp decline in recorded speakers led to its virtual

disappearance from the 1971 census schedule.[11] Over the same period the numbers of Hindi and Urdu speakers increased as these languages became equated with Hindus and Muslims respectively. In a post-Partition context, declaring yourself a 'mother tongue' Urdu speaker would become a means to assert a minority identity, and a census enumerator's decision to ignore your claim and record the language you 'actually' speak would also be read politically. Brass describes Urdu movement leaders dismissing the 1961 census as "bogus" on the basis that it recorded two million fewer Urdu speakers than Muslims in UP (1974: 189). In recent times, during my fieldwork in Uttar Pradesh, I was repeatedly told about Muslims being recorded as mother-tongue Hindi speakers even though they identify themselves as speaking Urdu, in what was perceived to be a deliberate attempt to underestimate the numbers of Urdu speakers and Muslims in India. Contrary to the claims of Bernard Cohn, who limits the census's effects to the enumerators who then as now were responsible for filling in the forms (1987: 248), these examples suggest that questions left unasked and answers misrepresented also work to make the bias and arbitrariness of state classifications legible to those whom it claims to describe.

State sanctioned language censuses may be "political, not philological, documents" (Brass 1974: 190), but they are also part of a bureaucratic process, subject to bureaucratic inertia and opacity, with repercussions for the efficacy of "the biopolitical project of knowing the population to manage it better" (Gupta 2012: 43). In *Red Tape* Gupta observes that neglecting to observe how statistics are collected and deployed is likely to obscure "the relationship between biopower and issues like sovereignty and violence" (ibid: 42). Statistics may be linked to state attempts to impose legibility on populations, but in practice "possessing more detailed statistics does not always correspond to better knowledge about the subject of scrutiny" (ibid). He illustrates this with his experience of doing fieldwork in

[11] The *Report of the Committee for the Promotion of Urdu* (hereafter the *Gujral Committee Report*) records that 6,742,937 Hindustani speakers were recorded in Uttar Pradesh in 1951; 100,530 in 1961 (although "Nil" were recorded in urban areas); and a statistically negligible number in 1971, there are no figures given for Hindustani in this year (GI [Government of India] 1975: 19).

rural UP and learning of how census data for an entire village was collected from the first house on the main road that led to it (ibid: 43). The farmer living there claims a census worker had sat on his cot and asked him who lived in the village and how many people there were in each household. Gupta observes that whilst some information may have been collected this way, its accuracy was questionable. Awareness of such dubious data collection methods leads him to conclude that statistics can be an ineffective instrument of biopolitics.

This does not, however, preclude them enabling less transparent exercises of state power. In their work on anthropology in the margins of the state Veena Das and Deborah Poole point to the "many different spaces, forms, and practices through which the state is continually both experienced and undone through the *illegibility* of its own practices, documents, and words" (Das and Poole 2004: 9-10). In her essay "The Signature of the State: The Paradox of Illegibility", Das relates Derrida's critique of notions of the intentionality of language, which would connect "consciousness in speech acts to the presence of the person and in writing to the apprehending of a signature" (2004: 227), to reconsider the instability produced by the gap between a rule and its implementation in state operations. This alerts her to how what in "ordinary life" would fall within the domain of "human vulnerability" (that words can be de-contextualised and transfigured) in the life of the state becomes "a mode of circulation through which power is produced" (ibid: 245). When she speaks of how the state is brought into the public realm by technologies of writing that simultaneously institute "the possibility of forgery, imitation and the mimetic performances of its power" (ibid: 227), she describes a much more uncertain process than Bourdieu's description of a social world "riddled with *calls to order*" (Bourdieu et al 1994: 14), and her account would seem to accord with how Muslims come to 'know' the state through census operations perceived to underestimate their presence.

Conversely, there is nothing straightforward about how these statistics are in turn read by the state. Although the census matters to language activists because it forms the

basis for provision of facilities, in practice, its recording of a certain number of Urdu speakers has been insufficient to secure its position in India. Urdu may be the sixth most widely spoken language in the country according to the census, but, unlike most of the languages on the census schedule, it is not the language spoken by the majority of people in any State. (It is the official language of the State of Kashmir, but not the main spoken language there.) Article 345 of the Indian Constitution declares that there is no bar to a State Legislature adopting more than one official language, and Article 347, that the President may authorize State recognition of a language, if he believes a "substantial proportion" of the population "desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognised throughout that State or any part thereof". However the vagueness of the terms "substantial proportion" and "languages spoken" has hampered its implementation. Questions have also been raised about whether Article 347 refers to the total number of speakers in a State, or could accommodate provisions for linguistic minorities concentrated in certain parts of it.

When the central state appointed Gujral Committee called on legal experts to clarify the term "substantial proportion", they expressed the view that it suggests a percentage of no less than 15 to 20 percent in a State as a whole (GI 1975: 28). According to the census Urdu does not have that many speakers in any Indian State, and one of the legal experts suggested that this obstacle could be overcome if a distinction was made between mother-tongue, official language and language spoken (ibid: 29). In a State such as Uttar Pradesh in which many more people speak Urdu than the 11% then recorded on the census, this would justify official status for the language.

The report produced by the Gujral Committee sidesteps the question of how Article 347 should be interpreted (ibid: 142), but commends use of Urdu for official purposes where there are 10% or more speakers of Urdu (ibid: 147). The Union Government and State Chief Ministers had already agreed to provide facilities to "linguistic pockets having a population of fifteen per cent or more", but a "more liberal attitude" is enjoined in the case of a

language like Urdu, which has "no compact concentration of speakers in any one State but has a substantial population in a number of States" (ibid). Despite this, no such recognition was accorded to Urdu in UP until *The Uttar Pradesh Official Language (Amendment) Act* was passed in 1989. The move was instigated by Congress Chief Minister N.D. Tiwari, apparently with a view to winning the Muslim vote in the Lok Sabha election of that same year, and was immediately contested by Hindu nationalist and Hindi organisations. (I will discuss BJP opposition to the move in more detail in the next section.) The Allahabad Hindi Sahitya Sammelan filed a Personal Interest Litigation in the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court on the grounds that it was not within the power of the legislature to adopt an additional official language, and that there was an insufficient proportion of Urdu speakers in UP to warrant such a measure. The High Court rejected the case in 1996, which led the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to file a special leave petition in the Supreme Court. The case dragged on in the courts for over two decades, until the Supreme Court in September 2014 upheld the 1996 judgment giving Urdu the status of second official language for seven administrative purposes. But even these belated and hard-won concessions were limited in scope, as was observed, when they were first proposed, by the 1990 report on the implementation of the Gujral Committee's recommendations.[12]

Alongside its marginalization in bureaucracy, Urdu was to gradually disappear from state school education, despite constitutional safeguards and central state policy guidelines for education in minority languages. Article 350a of the Constitution, introduced in 1956 as an implementation of a recommendation of the *Report of the States Reorganisation Commission* (1955), requires States to provide facilities for primary-level instruction in the mother tongue language of children belonging to linguistic minority groups. But this has

[12] The report notes that the provisions of the Act "are much less than those recommended by the Gujral Committee" (64). They covered: "entertaining petitions and applications in Urdu and replies thereof in Urdu; receiving documents written in Urdu by the registration office; publication of important government rules, regulations and notifications in Urdu also; issuing government orders and circulars of public importance in Urdu also, publication of important government advertisements in Urdu also, publication of Urdu translation also of the Gazette and exhibition of important signposts in Urdu." http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/sc-upholds-urdu-as-second-official-language-in-uttar-pradesh/1/380970.html (accessed 08/03/2015).

been unevenly applied across regions and languages, because of ambiguity surrounding the terms 'linguistic minority' and 'mother tongue'. In implementing Article 350a the State of UP has been guided by the "10-40" formula issued by the Department of Education in 1952, which stipulates that in a primary school class of 40 students ten would have to request instruction in their mother-tongue for such an arrangement to be made. The *Report of the Uttar Pradesh Language Committee*, for example, upholds this (GUP [Government of UP] 1962: 32-33). The *Gujral Committee Report* points out that the formula has been unworkable because of its unwieldiness and non-implementation by lower-level educational authorities (GI 1975: 44), and a follow-up report records that there were only 1375 Urdu medium primary schools in UP, despite the presence of 10,767,175 Urdu speakers, and that most of these were religious schools run by the "linguistic minority" itself, although sometimes financed by the state (GI 1990: 69). The situation was said to be even worse at the secondary level, where there is no constitutional obligation for representation of minority languages. The same report claims that in Uttar Pradesh "there is not a single Government Urdu medium secondary school" (ibid: 12), and in his 2006 overview of the state of Urdu education in India, Ather Farouqui writes that there is "not a single primary Urdu-medium school" in the state and only two secondary schools, both of which were run by Aligarh Muslim University (2006: 184).

In addition to the disappearance of Urdu-medium state schools, Urdu as a subject was affected by a particular understanding of the Education Ministry's three-language formula of language learning, which was introduced in *The National Policy on Education* (1968).[13] According to the formula, secondary school children in the Hindi-speaking States would study Hindi, English and a modern Indian language apart from Hindi, and those in the non-Hindi-speaking States, the regional language, Hindi and English. *The National Policy on Education* recommends that Hindi-speaking States choose a modern Indian language from

[13] http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/NPE-1968.pdf (accessed 07/04/2015).

the southern States, but the decision was left to their discretion. In the Hindi-speaking States, where the choice of third language was dependent on "the majority wish of the students" (Brass 1974: 210), there was little incentive to study another regional language whilst English and Hindi continued to be official languages of the Union. Urdu might seem to be the natural choice of third language, given that prior to Independence both Hindi and Urdu had been used in state education (GI 1975: 42), but this was discouraged by the decision to recognise Sanskrit as a "modern Indian language". Faced with a choice between Urdu and Sanskrit, the former for many students requiring the acquisition of a new script, students are said to have been "practically required to learn Sanskrit as their third language" (Brass 1974: 210).

The National Policy on Education also leaves open this interpretation by encouraging greater resources for Sanskrit because of "its unique contribution to the cultural unity of the country" (1968: 40). This perception is by now hard to fathom after decades of pro-Sanskrit advocacy by Hindu nationalist organisations, but Sanskrit was available as a choice of "Modern Indian Language" because it had been listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution on these grounds. In "Sanskrit for the Nation" (2009), Sumathi Ramaswamy describes support for the cause of Sanskrit as a national language by a wide range of people during the Constituent Assembly debates, many of whom came from beyond the Hindi belt, such as Ambedkar and Naziruddin Ahmad of the Muslim League in Bengal. This is said to have been partly "a last-ditch effort to salvage the linguistic mess in which the Constituent Assembly found itself" after three years of deliberation on the future of India's languages (ibid: 108), but also because the language was perceived to belong to "no one single region, caste, or religion, even while belonging to all of them" (ibid: 122). In its detachment from any particular region it resembles Urdu and was therefore able to supplant it as third language in the Hindi-speaking States.

State level subversion of constitutional injunctions and central state policy directives, based in a restricted understanding of what constitutes a 'substantial proportion' and a

flexible understanding of the 'modern', can be seen to have led to the decline of Urdu in a region where it was formerly the predominant language. The attitude that led to this situation is conveyed by J.B. Kripalani, the Chairman of the UP Language Committee, in his introduction to the Committee's 1962 report on the status of Urdu following the creation of linguistic states:

> I would like to remind you that though Urdu is the language of a minority of people living in this State, it is not the language of a particular minority community or religious group. Only a minority of the whole population of Uttar Pradesh speak and write in the Urdu style of language. This minority consists of members of both the majority and minority communities, as also of some Christians and Sikhs. When, therefore, we say that Urdu is a minority language, it does not mean that the minority belongs to a particular religion or religious community.
> (GUP 1962: 7)

These equivocating statements about the "Urdu style of language" are consistent with the report's emphasis on how Indian culture being a harmonious fusion of various influences it is unfeasible "to demarcate different cultural groups in India or term any of them as 'cultural minorities'" (ibid: 19). It dismisses calls for Urdu to be made second language of UP with reference to the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission (that second language status could only be accorded to those spoken by 30% or more of the population), and emphasizes that linguistic facilities should "be in tune with the larger interests of national integration" (ibid: 25). In his analysis of this document Brass underlines the "remarkable sophistry" at the heart of its assertion that although a certain number of people speak Urdu as their mother tongue and it is the language of a minority of people living in the State, Urdu speakers do not constitute "'a particular minority community or religious group'" (1974: 204).

Rather than arising out of a concern with legibility or 'control on the basis of knowledge' UP State language policy and its bureaucratic implementation seems to have been characterized by wilful blindness and ignorance. Its reluctance to confer central state sanctioned recognition on Urdu could even be described as a case of ideologically motivated deliberate misrecognition, some aspects of which are illuminated by Bourdieu's concept of

"méconnaissance". That is, a system of classification which reproduces the objective classes "by securing the misrecognition, and hence the recognition, of the arbitrariness on which they are based" (2000: 164). The term is also an important aspect of Althusser's writings on ideology, derived from his reading of Freud's extension of Marx's de-centering of the "human subject, the economic, political or philosophical ego", to discover the "individual in his essence" as constituted "by a structure which has no 'centre' either, except in the imaginary misrecognition of the 'ego', i.e. in the ideological formations in which it recognizes itself" (Althusser 1977b: 201).

For Bourdieu méconnaissance is both a question of embodied durable dispositions as well as consciousness, and language is of particular interest to him because it partakes of the two. In *Language and Symbolic Power* he describes how on the one hand, language is a "body technique" and linguistic competence a dimension of one's "bodily hexis", through which a socially informed relation to the world is expressed (1994: 86). At the same time it participates in the act of naming which helps to structure this world: "gossip, slander, lies, insults, commendations, criticisms, arguments and praises are all daily and petty manifestations of the solemn and collective acts of naming" (ibid: 105). But the belief and legitimacy which gives these words efficacy is said to derive from another source. Namely, symbolic power, an "almost magical power" that transforms "the vision of the world itself" through the structure in which belief is produced rather than by coercive force (ibid: 170).

When dealing with a language such as Urdu, which reveals the limits of standard criteria for official language status ('mother tongue', 'minority' and 'region'), the role of "imaginary misrecognition" in both its marginalization and promotion would seem to be particularly clear. Paul Brass neatly connects the two strands, the psychoanalytic and the political, in his critique of what he describes as "the infantile and narcissistic metaphors of mother tongue and mother's milk", said to be based in "self-glorification and other disparagement" and a politics of "mobilization and separation" (2004: 366). By extension,

the continued significance of Urdu in the informal education sector and its unofficial cultural afterlife in post-Independence India might seem to be captured by the term "allodoxia", "misapprehension" of the true value of their qualifications by victims of devaluation arising out of a "hysteresis of habitus, which causes previously appropriate categories of perception and appreciation to be applied to a new state of the qualification market" (Bourdieu 1984: 142).

But all this talk of false knowledge, based in assumptions about true knowledge and objectively verifiable social positions, provokes the question: who is to judge? Who is to say what constitutes true or false knowledge? Or, more specifically, which language someone is 'actually' speaking or 'should' learn? This is the crux of Rancière's critique of Bourdieu, and more generally of a sociological method which would presuppose the result that it is supposed to establish, and whose "scientific" war against allodoxy he views as a "war against the aesthetic and democratic unrest of the division of the body politic within itself" (2006c: 7). He asserts that what is called "allodoxy is in fact aesthetic dissensus, the dehiscence between the arms and the gaze of the carpenter, the sensible rupture of the relation between a body and what it knows – in the double sense of knowing" (ibid). Rather than being reducible to interests and drives, in the terms of political and psychoanalytic theory, aesthetics means "'finality without end'…a pleasure disconnected from every science of ends" (ibid: 5).

This aesthetics of politics also counters Althusser's distinction between art and knowledge, which is the basis of his famous dismissal of the significance of lived experience:

> Neither Balzac nor Solzhenitsyn gives us any *knowledge* of the world they describe, they only make us 'see', 'perceive' or 'feel' the reality of the ideology of that world. When we speak of ideology we should know that ideology slides into all human activity, that it is identical with the 'lived' experience of human existence itself: that is why the form in which we are 'made to see' ideology in great novels has as its content the 'lived' experience of individuals. This 'lived' experience is not a *given*, given by a pure 'reality', but the spontaneous 'lived experience' of ideology in its peculiar relationship to the real.
> (Althusser 1977c: 223)

Knowledge is said to always be *conceptual*, moving beyond the epiphenomena of perception to penetrate the "complex mechanisms" which produce the 'lived experience' described in Solzhenitsyn's fiction (ibid).

Rancière, on the other hand, pays more respect to both the perceptual *and* the imaginary, he describes refusal and consent as a matter of perceptual experience (2011a: 240) and writes of the double nature of all knowledge, of an ensemble of knowledges and an organized distribution of positions, and of how both are shadowed by "an ignorance which liberates" (2006c: 3). This liberatory potential is realised in the example of artisans who act "as if they were at home in the house that they otherwise know is not theirs" (ibid: 6). Far from being an example of false consciousness, this "as if" supplements their identity as a worker at home in a defined regime with "a *proletarian* identity", which for Rancière means "the identity of a subject capable of escaping the assignment to a private condition and of intervening in the affairs of the community" (ibid). For both Bourdieu and Rancière, class is a conceptual category rather than an exclusively socioeconomic one, but in the latter's work proletarian identity opens up the possibility of escaping structural determinants rather than establishes their coordinates.

This 'as if' is therefore also quite distinct from what Chatterjee describes as "the "as if" behaviour of economic agents", brought into being by the often coercive force of "new economic institutions backed by the regulative and legal powers of the modern state" (2011: 138). In his essay, "The People in Utopian and Real Time", he also expresses scepticism about the Marxist distinction between "the fetishism of ideology and the truth of science", drawing attention to how, in the twentieth century, the all pervasiveness of statistical reasoning has incorporated the "allegedly fetishized behaviour of economic agents as *data* for policy-making" (ibid: 137). Nevertheless, he persists in tracing this 'behaviour' *back* to the state, conceived as the determining element in the 'real' political order.

As well as allowing more room for 'proletarians' to manoeuver, Rancière's non-instrumentalist aesthetics of politics also opens up the possibility of a less rigid view of state-society relations. The idea of the universal imposition of a legitimate national culture and language (Bourdieu 1994: 8) in particular does not account for the survival of Urdu and the un-success of attempts to legitimise the imposition of Hindi, from creation of Linguistic States in 1956, amendment of *The Official Languages Act* (1963) to allow for the continued use of English in 1967, to Urdu's continued unofficial and informal afterlife in the State where it has suffered the worst decline. Linguistic States and the amendment of *The Official Languages Act* were brought about because of protests and pressure from the non-Hindi speaking States. The continued significance of Urdu in UP is largely because of the support of religious establishments who run Urdu medium schools in the informal education sector, in rural and remote areas often stepping into a state-created vacuum, and also its continued presence in media. Informal educational institutions and private media organisations are sometimes indirectly supported by the state, but neither can be seen as pure and anticipated outcomes of its policies.

A significant recent example of this is the popular Urdu poetry and literature site *Rekhta.org*, which presents Nastaliq, Devanagari and Roman versions of Urdu poems, with crowd-sourced Urdu-to-English translations and links to YouTube videos and audio recordings. In an interview with the *Hindu* newspaper, Sanjiv Saraf, the entrepreneur who founded the site, declares "Urdu is not my mother-tongue but the language of my heart because Urdu poetry embeds every emotion in it".[14] Wider appreciation of Urdu poetry is made possible by a combination of factors: a wealthy benefactor, new technology, the close concordance between spoken Hindi and Urdu, increased literacy in Hindi and English and the persistence of poetry as a living form in South Asia.

[14] "Urdu poetry made accessible", *The Hindu*, 17 January 2013: http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-metroplus/urdu-poetry-made-accessible/article4314372.ece (accessed 16/03/2015).

The reading public

Into the current day, repressive colonial-era legislation continues to frame Indian newspaper production (1860 *Penal Code*, 1867 *Press and Registration of Books Act*, 1885 *Telegraph Act*, 1898 *Indian Post Office Act*, 1923 *Official Secrets Act*) and the Indian Constitution notably lacks a provision on freedom of the press. Until quite recently, with the introduction of *The Freedom of Information Bill* (2000) and *The Right to Information Act* (2005), regulation seems to have been weighted towards control rather than freedom of expression, and even then it would seem to depart from what Kathryn Woolard describes as "the American folk ideology of free speech, which fosters the sense that speakers control language" (1998: 26), and which she views as being contextualised by Western, vernacular belief systems that naturalise language standards through "metaphors such as that of the free market" (ibid: 21). This belief is more commonly described as universal, and a conflation of free speech with free markets can be discerned in one of its most famous expressions, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). Article 19 of the UDHR defines freedom of expression as the right "to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Reference is made to the imparter, seeker and receiver of information and ideas, to the opinion holder, but there is no mention of any wider context except for references to the media through which ideas, information and opinions flow, and the interference and frontiers that are said to potentially restrict their circulation. This section of the UDHR therefore seems to embody the ideal of what Latour has described as "*double click communication*", "the dream of honest thinking, of non-deformation, of immediacy, of the absence of any mediator" (2003: 145-146).

As Latour observes, this ideal is easily disproved by any mouse user. India may have been a signatory of the UDHR, but in the immediate post-Independence era, the turmoil of Partition and socialist sympathies of Congress party leadership encouraged a cautious attitude towards freedom of speech, free markets and the combination of both found in the

newspaper market. It was at the instigation of Nehru that the first restrictions on the Indian Constitution's provisions on "Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech etc." were introduced in 1951, as part of *The Constitution (First Amendment) Act*.[15] This subjected Article 19(1)(a), concerning freedom of speech, to "reasonable restrictions" in order to safeguard India's sovereignty and integrity, "friendly relations with foreign States", and public order, decency and morality. When justifying the amendment in Parliament, Nehru is said to have emphasised his appreciation for the press as "'one of the vital organs of modern life'", but maintained that the "'concept of individual freedom has to be balanced with social freedom and the relations of the individual with the social group" (Austin 1999: 46).[16] He also questioned the idea of the press as guardians of free speech, given the existence of newspaper monopolies: "'When gigantic newspaper chains spring up and undermine the freedom of the independent newspapers, when the press in India is controlled by three or four groups of individuals, what kind of a press is that?" (ibid).

A vitalist conception of Capital and information as self-determining forces underlies the Indian state's attempts to harness the double-edged power of print capitalism to both create new forms of sociality and threaten the integrity of social groups, through rationing of newsprint and attempts to control the price of newspapers through *The Newspaper (Price & Page) Act* (1956) and *The Daily Newspapers (Price & Page) Order* (1960). This legislation was apparently intended to protect small newspapers from unfair competition by preventing big newspapers from cutting prices whilst increasing volume. Rationing and restrictions on the import of newsprint were eased in 1992 and have been inoperative since 1997 (GI 2011: 39-40), and price controls were vetoed by the Supreme Court on the basis that stipulating a minimum price for a newspaper would "deter a class or section of its readers from purchasing such a newspaper" and therefore be an infringement on freedom of expression

[15] http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/amend/amend1.htm (accessed 17/04/2015).
[16] Austin notes that the amendment ironically ended up strengthening the Article, as "providing that any limitations on free speech must be 'reasonable' strengthened the right through judicial review" (ibid: 50). In chapter three, dealing with the emergency, I will look at the often counterproductive nature of censorship in more detail.

as guaranteed by the Indian Constitution (Basu 2010: 287). Both the legislation and the Supreme Court judgment overturning it evoke social harmony: *The Daily Newspapers (Price & Page) Order* cites the risk of creating monopolies that will drive smaller newspapers to the wall and in this way skew the whole newspaper market. The Supreme Court judgment's reference to a "certain class of reader" evokes a larger society composed of various classes whose balance must be protected from market forces.

Nowadays, continuity with pre-censorship through indirect pressure can be seen most clearly in the significance of state advertising revenue. Advertising has traditionally been a major support for newspapers around the world. Although this business model no longer works so well in countries with high levels of internet penetration such as the US,[17] it still seems to in India, where according to World Bank estimates only 15.1% of Indians had used the internet in 2013 via computer, mobile phone, personal digital assistant, games machine, digital TV etc.[18] This percentage is increasing year-on-year, it has doubled from the 7.5% first recorded in 2010. But, from what can be gathered from official circulation statistics, into the 2000s Indian newspapers seem to be doing well. *Press in India: 2009-10* reports a 5.8% growth in total registered publications over the previous year (GI 2011: xi) and a 19.71% increase in total circulation of newspapers.

According to the First and Second Press reports, almost half of the revenue of Indian newspapers came from advertising, and following the economic liberalization polices of the early nineties the proportion seems to have increased significantly. According to Vanita Kohli-Khander's overview of *The Indian Media Business*, approximately 80% of a publication's revenue comes from advertising, the exact amount varying according to "language, frequency, price, the market it addresses" (2010: 29). Private advertising revenue is greater for newspapers with large circulation and written in English, because of what is

[17] See the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism's 2012 report "The Search for a New Business Model", which describes how American newspapers struggle to build up digital revenue to make up for print losses: http://www.journalism.org/files/legacy/SEARCHFORNEWREVENUEMODEL.pdf (accessed 14/04/2016).
[18] http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.P2 (accessed 20/03/2015).

perceived to be their more affluent readership, meaning that Urdu papers tend to be reliant on state advertising revenue, but also relatively independent of consumer demand. Hence the increase in the number of registered Urdu newspapers, in part facilitated by new technology (more on this in next chapter), despite the apparent decline of Urdu in India generally and Uttar Pradesh in particular. DAVP rates are also fixed according to circulation and vary according to language, district and the type of advert.

Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity – Cost estimate of advertising – Display (Colour)[19]

Proposed to be published in Lucknow in the following newspapers on 18/04/2015			
Newspaper	**Language**	**Circulation**	**Rs per sq. cm**
Dainik Jagran*	Hindi	251855	114
Times of India*	English	107820	49
Rashtriya Sahara	Hindi	82483	38
In Dinon*	Urdu	75000	34
Sahafat	Urdu	67083	34
Roznama Rashtriya Sahara	Urdu	41199	25
Indian Express	English	25064	20

*Newspaper with highest circulation within that language.

To put these figures into perspective, a private colour display advert on the front page of the Lucknow edition of *The Times of India* cost Rs 1005.75 per square centimetre in April 2015, as per its website.[20] The same advert in its Delhi edition cost Rs 5550 per centimetre. Nonetheless, because of a policy of preferring Urdu newspapers for state advertising, they remain a lucrative source for newspapers published in that language. The editor of a *Sahafat*,

[19] http://www.davp.nic.in/Upload/davp_estimate.aspx (accessed 18/4/2015)
[20] http://timesofindia.releasemyad.com/display-ad.php (accessed 18/4/2015).

an Urdu paper headquartered in Lucknow and largely catering to a Shia readership, claimed that advertising made up more than 90% of the revenue of his paper, and that almost all of this came from the central and State level government.[21] Looking at these figures, it is striking that the rate for *Sahafat* (Rs 34 per sq. cm) is significantly higher than that for the *Indian Express* (Rs 20 per sq. cm). Although *Indian Express* may on paper have a lower circulation rate than *Sahafat* it is one of the most widely read newspapers by journalists and politicians in north India, famous for its editorials, commentary and investigative journalism; whereas *Sahafat* has a niche audience even within the small Urdu-reading market.

The DAVP is the main body for co-ordinating conferral of central state advertising to newspapers and journals, and regional information departments often follow the lead of its policy in selecting newspapers in which to advertise and fixing advertising rates. According to this policy "the DAVP does not take into account the political affiliation or editorial policies of newspapers/journals" when releasing adverts.[22] However claims to impartiality sit alongside several moments when it has preferred certain papers on the basis of their political affiliations, notoriously during the internal emergency of 1975-77.[23] In recent times the DAVP has sought to introduce greater transparency into its workings through a written advertising policy (2007) and online empanelment process. But there are still anomalies in its distribution of adverts, notably over-representation of Hindi and Urdu papers proportionate to their readerships, and of the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh relative to its population. In an attempt to go beyond pointing out obvious inconsistencies and instead

[21] Interview with Aman Abbas, Editor of *Sahafat*, Lucknow, 13 September 2011.
[22] http://www.davp.nic.in/Newspaper_Advertisement_Policy.html (accessed 15/11/2011).
[23] The report of the Shah Commission enquiry into emergency-era abuses describes how the DAVP categorised newspapers as "friendly, neutral and hostile", and government advertising was awarded or withdrawn on this basis. It cites the example of *Dastan-e-Watan*, an Urdu paper published from Delhi, which had its advertising resumed after the journal ceased to follow "a pro-Jana Sangh policy" and started to support Congress (GI 1978, Vol. I: 40). The report concludes that the government during this period had "utilised its advertising policy as a source of financial assistance or denial of financial assistance to newspapers" (ibid: 41), and had even put pressure on private advertising agencies to do the same (ibid: 42).

trying to understand how policy works alongside other factors to produce specific outcomes, I will proceed to focus on how it favours certain regions and languages.

Almost half the daily newspapers registered in India for the period 2009-10 were written in Hindi (1844 out of 3909) and the second most significant language for daily papers was Urdu (GI 2011: 7). The Indian census does not indicate which languages respondents are literate in, merely records spoken language and literacy per se, and its definition of Hindi is very broad. In the 2001 census the scheduled "language" Hindi encompasses more than 49 "mother tongues".[24] Even if we were to assume that the recorded 41.05% Hindi speakers and 5.01% Urdu speakers are also able to read these languages, this would still not account for their prominent position amongst registered newspapers.

With regards to regional concentration of registered newspapers, according to the 2011 census UP has an overall literacy rate of 69.72% as opposed to the national average of 74.04%, putting it in 28th place out of a total of 35 States and Union Territories. Nevertheless Uttar Pradesh has the largest number of registered daily newspapers in India: 964 according to the RNI annual report covering the period 2009-2010 (GI 2011: 8). That is almost twice as much as the next territory, Andhra Pradesh, which has 500 registered daily newspapers (ibid), and out of proportion to its population. According to the 2011 census UP is home to 199 million of India's 1.21 billion people.

The first explanation for these apparent anomalies that comes to hand is DAVP advertising policy, which in many ways seems to provide greater incentive for Hindi and Urdu papers to register with the RNI than those written in other Indian languages, and to therefore disproportionately favour north Indian newspapers.[25] (Registrar of Newspapers of India membership is one of the requirements for empanelment with the DAVP.)

[24] http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.aspx (accessed 16/02/2015).
[25] http://www.davp.nic.in/Newspaper_Advertisement_Policy.html (accessed 05/07/2012).

Clause 3 of the DAVP's advertising policy
Language 30% (approx.) of its advertising budget is devoted to English publications. 35% (approx.) to Hindi 35% (approx.) to papers written in "Regional and other languages", in keeping with its concern to encourage unity and communal harmony. ("Other" languages include Bodo, Dogri, Garhwali, Kashmiri, Khasi, Konkani, Maithili, Manipuri, Mizo, Nepali, Rajasthani, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Urdu and state government certified Tribal languages.)
Size 15% minimum to small papers (with a circulation of 25,000 copies per publishing day) 35% minimum to medium sized newspapers (with a circulation of between 25,001 and 75,000 copies per publishing day). 50% maximum to big papers (with a circulation of more than 75,000)

Hindi and English, the two official languages of the Union as per *The Official Languages Act* (1963),[26] receive the bulk of central state advertising, as do big newspapers. But this is balanced against a concern for smaller and medium sized papers, which are less well placed to attract lucrative private advertising, and newspapers written in "Regional and other languages". The requirement for newspapers to be "uninterruptedly and regularly under publication" for 36 months is relaxed for the latter. Proof of only six months continuous publication is required from papers written in these languages.

Because of the history of Hindi, Urdu and English in India, of all the "Regional and other languages" Urdu is easily the most established as a print language in the post-Independence period. Additionally, according to Audit Bureau of Circulation figures for 2013 there is no Urdu newspaper with "big" circulation, meaning that they also benefit from

[26] http://deity.gov.in/content/official-language-act (accessed 20/3/2014).

concessions for small and medium papers. *The Munsif Daily*, published from Hyderabad, has the highest circulation of any registered Urdu paper. In the period from July – December 2013, it recorded a circulation of 61,113.[27] Figures for *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara*, which claims to be the most widely circulated Urdu paper in India, and which I will discuss in the subsequent chapter, are not available via the ABC. But its website claims *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* is the "most widely read Urdu daily of the country", with a "print-run" of 393,000 and a "readership base" of 3.151 million.[28] Whereas *Rashtriya Sahara* (Hindi) claims a daily readership of 98,000 in accordance with the 2011 Indian Readership Survey (IRS), and a circulation of 100,000 on the basis of ABC figures.[29]

Despite the much wider geographical spread of Urdu compared to Hindi, it seems unlikely that there would be more readers for Sahara's Urdu paper. Doubts are further encouraged by the fact that figures for its Urdu edition are ambiguously worded and not independently verified. "Print run" exists in even more tangential relationship to actual sales than does "circulation". Circulation is defined in *Press in India: 2009-10* as average number of newspapers "sold and distributed free per publishing day" (GI 2011: x). These figures are self-reported by newspapers, verified by accountants hired by the Audit Bureau of Circulation, and then used to attract advertising revenue, meaning that even official figures are viewed with scepticism. Additionally, "Readership-base" is distinct from "readership", the term used by the IRS, which is also hard to estimate.[30]

The fact that *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* is still able to receive state advertising despite not meeting the usual criteria for DAVP empanelment perhaps indicates the indulgence with which the Urdu press is viewed. Historically, this seems to have been true

[27] http://www.auditbureau.org/news/view/17 (accessed 10/03/2015).
[28] http://www.roznamasahara.com/abtusaspx.aspx (accessed 20/03/2015).
[29] http://www.newspaperadagency.com/rashtriya-sahara.htm (accessed 20/05/2015).
[30] See the controversy that has met recent attempts to improve the Indian Readership Survey's methodology (correlating census data and projections with "digitally captured" individual and household data). IRS note on its new methodology. http://www.mruc.net/?q=irs-methodology (accessed 20/03/2015). *Times of India* report on media houses' rejection of its findings: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/18-top-media-houses-rubbish-readership-survey-findings/articleshow/29674900.cms? (accessed 20/03/2015).

for small and vernacular newspapers in general, with the two terms, according to Jeffrey, often being perceived as synonymous (2000: 55). He describes how in the "socialist" India of the 1950s to 1970s, proprietors of "small" newspapers viewed advertising as a "gift" bestowed upon "the newspaper industry's deserving poor" (ibid), and the government rationale for this policy is expressed in the *Report of the Second Press Commission*:

> Among the Indian language newspapers, small and medium newspapers serving a district or a group of districts can play a more direct role in the process of democratizing communication than newspapers aiming at State-level or multi-State circulation
> (GI 1982, Vol. I: 21)

By these means, the state would be able to control and channel socially disruptive market forces. In state hands newspapers would become an instrument to increase participation in the "public sphere" (Jeffrey 2000: 51).

In practice this goal has been subverted by the phenomenon of 'phantom newspapers'. Concessions for small, medium and vernacular papers have led to proliferation of newspapers which exist to cream-off state advertising, only publishing a nominal number of copies that are then distributed to and filed in government offices as all registered newspapers are required to be, in contravention of Clause 2 of the DAVP policy, which states that government advertisements are not offered as financial assistance for newspapers/journals. The existence of these papers was recorded in the *Report of the Second Press Commission*, in an appendix titled "Spurious Newspapers: The U.P. Experience", which describes the "mixed consequences and unforeseen bad results" of help given to small newspapers (GI 1982, Vol. II: 75). It cites a report commissioned by the UP government which discovered the prevalence of spurious newspapers practicing the art of "Sam-Dam-Dand-Bhed" (by hook or by crook), whose periodicity is determined by their need "to harass or oblige some individuals", and whose circulation bears no relation to reality "although they are certified by their chartered accountants" (ibid). In the current day, I was surprised to read that 1040 Hindi papers are published from Lucknow (GI 2011: 10) given that only a dozen or so regularly appear on the market.

When I spoke to officials at the RNI and the DAVP about 'file papers' they wearily acknowledged the phenomenon, and said that they were unable to control it because of lack of resources, and in the case of Urdu papers ('minority media') minded to overlook it.[31] Frank Noronha, Director General of the DAVP, was moved to exasperation when I brought up a campaign by the Urdu Newspaper Editors' Union to increase Urdu newspaper's share of advertising revenue to 15%, as in his view they were hardly ill-served by the existing policy. Fifteen percent is commonly thought to be the percentage of Muslims living in India, although the main instigator of the campaign, Hasan Shuja, editor of *Sahafat's* Delhi edition and President of the Union, denied that this was how he had arrived at the figure.[32] According to him, 15% is an accurate reflection of the number of people who read Urdu newspapers in India if one takes into account readerships rather than sales or circulation, the idea being that a newspaper is read by many people over the course of a day.

However, the image of the chai shop adda in which men huddle around a single paper and discuss the day's events is a bit romantic by now. Most Indian newspapers are delivered to private homes, and, as mentioned earlier, Urdu literacy in north India being increasingly limited to certain demographic groups (the elderly, the madrassa educated) it is unlikely that all members of a household which receives an Urdu paper would be able to read it. This is reflected in the growth of Hindi pull-out supplements in Urdu newspapers, sections of Urdu newspapers that are written in Hindi, and even papers that publish dual Nastaliq and Devanagari editions or Urdu papers written in Hindi script entirely. The Hindi paper, *Dainik Jagran*, even publishes a tabloid supplement, *INext*, written in mixed Roman and Devanagari script, whose language is a combination of 'Hindustani' and 'Hinglish' (a Hindi rich in Persian and Arabic vocabulary written in Roman script, and English written in Devanagari). 'Spurious newspapers' succeed in not just evading 'the immense writing-

[31] Interview with Frank Noronha, Director General of the DAVP, New Delhi, 26 August 2011. Interview with Manoj Roorkiwal, Registration Supervisor at RNI, New Delhi, 4 August 2011.
[32] Interview with Hasan Shuja, New Delhi, 21 August 2011.

machine', but in using it to their own advantage. Conversely the state turns a blind eye to minor infringements in order to keep the peace, to avoid over-stretching itself and preserve communal harmony.

Far from being motivated by a "biopolitical project of knowing the population to manage it better" (Gupta 2012: 43), the formulation and implementation of state policy in all three cases seems to have been characterised by blindness and inaction. In the first, we see constitutional and central state language and education policy subject to State level and bureaucratic implementation, which is in turn offset by extra-state forces (media, the confluence between spoken forms of Hindi and Urdu). Then, Hindu nationalist ideological opposition to Urdu language is checked at an early stage by national ambitions leading to the incongruence of an apparently 'pro-Urdu' policy. Finally, limited state and bureaucratic oversight of the press combined with Urdu's status as a language of Muslims encourages the growth of 'file papers'. With the end result that on paper, and also in practice, Urdu continues to be a significant language in post-Independence India.

Chapter two: Impossible speech

As a result of processes described in the previous chapter's discussion of Urdu's post-Independence status in India, the Indian Urdu press has come to be seen as both marginal and the voice for an electorally significant minority, and not just within India. Wikileaks cable 06 NEW DELHI 5470, "Indian Muslim Resentment Smoldering over Lebanon", describes how "the Urdu press has devoted much more space to these issues than English and Hindi language newspapers" and concludes with a discussion of "The Muslim Factor" in Congress electoral calculations, in terms familiar from colonial-era police reports on the 'Mohammadan press'.[33] In both periods, close attention to 'Muslim' press stemmed from anxiety about what was perceived to be the divided loyalties of Indian Muslims, and these debates were not confined to the state. Indian Muslims themselves engaged in charged discussions about the boundaries and nomenclature of various putative communities.

During the Independence struggle, this was famously expressed in an exchange of words, conducted in the Urdu press, between Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879-1957) and the poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), regarding the meaning of the terms: qaum, millat and ummat. Although the debate has come to be cast as a conflict between a "'Muslim separatist'" and a "'Muslim nationalist'", Sevea convincingly describes it as an "intra-Islamic" dispute over the acceptability of nationalism, centring upon how it related to these "traditional categories" (2012: 151). Qaum, most often translated as nation, can variously mean "A people, nation; a tribe, race, family; sect, caste" (Platts 2006: 796). Millat can also mean nation, or, more generally, a society or a company, but is more strongly redolent of religious community and faith (ibid: 1064). Ummat (or, more commonly, ummah) has by now come to be associated with the international community of Muslims, but can also encompass "religious sect, people of the same religion; followers; race, nation; caste; creed, religion" (ibid: 81). The unfixity of these terms has led them to be used

[33] https://wikileaks.org/cable/2006/08/06NEWDELHI5470.html (accessed 01/09/2015).

interchangeably, allowing dispute over their meaning to become a means to delimit sociopolitical community.

During a public meeting held in Delhi in December 1937, Madani is said to have asserted that in the current age "'nations (*qaumeen*) are based on homelands (*autaan*, pl. of *watn*), not religion (*mazhab*)'" (Metcalf 2005: 37). Urdu newspapers reported Madani as claiming that the "millat" was based on territory, provoking Iqbal to write a Persian verse mocking Madani's knowledge of Arabic. When Madani responded with a clarification of the terms he had used, Iqbal dismissed this as philological quibbling (ibid: 40). The main point was that territorial nationalism and Islam were incompatible. Thoughts of nationalism would only lead Muslims astray, onto the paths of "irreligiousness and scepticism" (Iqbal 1977: 262). He had been opposed to nationalism since before the concept had become known "in India and the Muslim world", he wrote, from early on identifying it as the most effective weapon of European imperialism, a means to shatter "the religious unity of Islam to pieces" (ibid: 252). This attitude he shared with contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi (1903-1979), who regarded nationalism as a modern form of kingship, and both as contrary to the Islamic principle of "equality of all men regardless of their birth" (Hartung 2013a: 117). But Iqbal's scepticism about the nation-form involved more than 'Islamism'. He was also working within what Barbara Metcalf describes as a "minor strand" of international intellectual denunciation of "the 'black' side of modernity: competitive nationalism and its resultant militarism, imperialism and consumerism" (2005: 40-41). This strand, and the influence of Bergson in particular, is expressed in his assertion, in a lecture printed in the Report of the 1911 Census, that Islam is in its essence "non-temporal, non-spatial" (1977: 104). As discussed in the introduction, through Walter Benjamin's concept of 'empty homogeneous time', Anderson would later go on to claim this as the ideal space time of the nation.

Conversely, Madani's counter-arguments in favour of 'composite nationalism' were based in particular circumstances of discrimination and oppression rather than faith in the "open-to-the-world plurals" of capitalist modernity (Anderson 1998a: 117). Indians who travelled abroad were regarded as members of the same "qaum", regardless of religion, and despised accordingly – hence it was a real category (Madani 2005: 55). If nationalism was such an effective weapon, why should Muslims themselves not use it to undermine the power of the British? Madani proposed an "Action plan for India": a "composite nationalism on the basis of national unity" as a means to throw off the yoke of colonial rule (ibid: 106). Far from being irreligious this would be on the lines of the constitution of Medina, which the Prophet Mohammad had formed between Muslims and non-Muslims in that city. In this view, the nation form itself was a historically contingent 'dispositif' rather than an instrument of oppression, and one which was compatible with Islamic and pre-modern types of political organisation.

Picking up on the concept of the dispositif of state and extending it to consider the nation state, this chapter deals with how the figure of the 'qaum' played out in the hands of two politically ambitious journalists: Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), during his editorship of the first iteration of *al-Hilal* (1912-14), and Aziz Burney (1952-), founder of the most widely distributed Indian Urdu newspaper, *Roznama Sahara Urdu*, who in 2013 started to publish his own newspaper, *Azizul Hind*. In Azad and Burney's writings 'qaum' implicitly means Muslims in India. However, writing in a multilingual context, with high levels of illiteracy but strong "literacy awareness" (Bayly 2007: 39), they encompass a much wider audience than Urdu-knowing Muslims, with repercussions in turn for how this 'qaum' is configured. I have selected these case studies because Burney claims a genealogical relationship with both reformist and revolutionary traditions of Indian Muslim leadership, and with Azad in particular. They therefore offer a useful comparison of speech conditions in colonial and

post-independence India, as evidenced during moments when Azad and Burney's writings were censored or censured.

Through this comparison I will also engage with the continued salience of religious language and symbols in Indian politics as a paradoxical legacy of colonial rule. In extension of the previous chapter's discussion of multi-symbol congruence, I argue against theories of symbolic instrumentalisation and 'misrecognition' of religious movements and symbols, and suggest that they could be better understood within the terms of a 'performative politics' and an aesthetics of politics. Sensitivity to the media, context and audience within which these performances are enacted, to what Butler describes as the "open temporality" of the performative, better reflects their contingent and therefore changeable nature.

Thinking along these lines encourages closer attention to the media through which information and ideas are transmitted; in particular, their uneven translation within and across languages, and to the role of technology. This chapter will elaborate upon the thesis's overall heuristic of techno-politics and allied concern with the insurrectionary possibilities of speech/writing, by dealing with the significance of the word, written and spoken, and its interface with the printed image. In the first section, with reference to *al-Hilal* and the Khilafat agitation in India, I will consider how a local politics existed alongside a revolutionary 'cosmopolitan' politics and was influenced by a Hindu nationalist 'cosmo-politics', based in a changing understanding of the significance of the spoken and the written word, of the image, and accordingly of 'the people'. In the next, I will describe the more limited possibilities available to Burney, working with the legacy of colonial-era reformist and revolutionary Indian Muslim politics, but also in a post-Independence context of state nationalism and vote banks, and facing more severe techno-material constraints. In this way, I pick up on strands contained in the previous chapter's discussion of the circuitous workings of the state and markets in a multilingual context. This chapter's discussion of censorship and representation also looks forward to subsequent chapters on the internal emergency of

1975-77 and electoral regulation. Its focus on censorship and spokesmanship relates to the thesis's overall concern with the role of the sending and receiving of messages in the formation of constituencies.

Abul Kalam Azad: 'Imam ul-Hind'

Bearing the title "The Indian People and the War", a letter written by S.P. Sanyal to the editor of the Indian English language newspaper, *The Pioneer*, and published on 11 October 1914, describes how the Great War "has taken hold of the Indian mind". Even in villages people talk about it; and scores of newspapers, in English and vernacular languages, are now being bought and sold in small towns. He writes that he was surprised to hear from a newspaper vendor that illiterate men, "even sweepers", have been known to buy penny newspapers ("paisa akhbar") and "have the war news read". These, he claims, are sure signs that "the unchangeable East is moving and moving rapidly", and in this connection notes the effects of the recent introduction of separate electorates for Muslims. The principle of "separate representation" is said to have been carried so far that "non-English knowing Moslem readers read only Moslem papers in vernacular [languages] although non-English knowing Hindu readers read vernacular papers issued by the Moslem as well as the Hindu press". He draws attention to a "certain paper" published in northern India and commanding a large circle of readers, which is "well known to Government" and whose writings "need careful watching rather than censoring", lest the "masses" start to see things from the German point of view.

This paper is not named, but on the 2 November 1914 *The Pioneer* published an editorial titled "Pro-Germanism at Calcutta", which describes the stance of *al-Hilal*, a widely circulated, illustrated Urdu journal edited by Abul Kalam Azad. It claims that the paper has so far managed to avoid censorship because "the style of the most mischievous articles is

very allusive and full of veiled sneers and sarcasms and innuendoes, most of which either disappear or lose their effect when translated into English, and it is not likely that many European officials read the paper in the original". For the benefit of such people *The Pioneer* describes sections of a recent double edition in which "the editor has gone much further than before in exalting the Germans and belittling and sneering at the British". This attitude is most egregiously exemplified by a picture of Belgian soldiers resting under some trees, bearing the caption "these were the last hours of rest enjoyed by this luckless nation" (the context being the fall of Antwerp, during which Belgian troops had been pushed back to Ghent by German forces), and a quotation from the Quran in Arabic, Hud Verse No.101: "We wronged them not, but they wronged themselves". A government which at such a time allows a British subject to publish such "malicious insinuations" must "lay claim to the possession of a most un-Germanic spirit of toleration", the writer concludes.

According to Barrier's history of censored literature in British India (1974), a spirit of toleration had not informed the colonial state's attitude towards the Indian press since the viceroyalty of Curzon (1889-1905). Whilst for much of the nineteenth century the Government of India is said to have preferred a "low-key policy of informal influence", increasing demands made by groups organised on regional and communal lines led it to reconsider existing arrangements (ibid: 8). Having grown disillusioned with official channels these groups had become militant and adopted new means for achieving their goals. Increasingly "mass politics involved using printed matter to affect a widened audience", and this was facilitated by the fact that printing technology had become cheaper and more accessible (ibid: 9). By 1905 publishing networks in both English and vernacular languages spanned every region; more than 200 newspapers commented on political issues, and were said by British observers to adopt a "disloyal" line, and for "less than 25 Rupees, a propagandist could publish a 16-page tract for distribution to the literate or to be read aloud to villagers" (ibid: 9-10). Hence the easily evaded requirement, introduced in 1867, that

books and newspapers bear the names of authors, printers, and publishers was made more stringent with the introduction of *The 1910 Press Act*.

The Act rendered all registered publications liable to payment of a security deposit of up to Rs 5,000, unless exempted by a local magistrate.[34] The deposit would be forfeited if a local government found that a document contained "any words, signs or visible representations, which are likely or may have a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, illusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise" to incite sedition. Specifically, to incite murder; seduce an officer, soldier or sailor from his duty; force any person to hand over their property or commit an illegal act; bring the British government into hatred or contempt; threaten or injure a public servant.

Images produced by the cow protection movement informed the 1910 Act's inclusion under the term "document" of "any painting, drawing or photograph or other visible representation", a move which in turn led Indian artist's to move away from the more obviously allegorical and propositional style of earlier visual propaganda to a more "figural" style, from a "sphere of language-like knowability" to a zone of felt intensities (Pinney 2009: 50). This could be expressed through depictions of apocalyptic devastation referring to events in Hindu mythology (ibid: 52-53), or scenes of abundance, "the richly watered, richly fruited, utopic space of a free India" (ibid: 54). In this way, increased surveillance of print culture can be seen to have encouraged "the expression of political aspirations through religious idioms" (ibid: 58). He argues that the intersection of religion and politics in contemporary India is partly a result of colonial and postcolonial censorship.

Although Pinney's examples mostly concern popular Hinduism and visual media, his argument is applicable to both of the case studies – *al-Hilal's* evasion of colonial censorship through the deployment of religious symbols and references, and moments when Azad and Burney have made political capital out of their position as Indian Muslim 'spokesmen'. But in

[34] The 1910 Press Act: http://lawmin.nic.in/legislative/textofcentralacts/1910.pdf (accessed 24/09/2015)

this chapter I will extend this capacity for figuration and intensity to language, and pay attention to its interaction with the image. Azad and Burney's sensitivity to these aspects of language partly emerges from their experience of Islamic practices of sermonising and Quranic recitation. William Graham's *Beyond the Written Word* reminds us that the Quran has been the subject of both "graphic/visual piety and attention" and "intense oral/aural piety and attention" (1987: 80). The meaning of recited scripture is said to inhere in something other than the literal meaning of a text, to encompass its "symbolic and affective force" (ibid: 114) and also the format in which it is expressed.

As Pinney observes, the 1910 Act was hard to implement, precisely because demarcating where "seditious" began and the merely "religious" or "mythic" ended involved difficult encounters with "vernacular cultural production" (2009: 40-41); in the case of *al-Hilal*, the allusive language, full of "veiled sneers and sarcasms and innuendoes", referred to in the *Pioneer* editorial. There were also techno-material limits to its implementation, with artists and publishers evading regulations by disseminating their messages through more mobile and less easily tracked media such as lithography and word of mouth (ibid: 54). As a result, the Act mainly affected letterpress production, which had "a relatively immobile infrastructure of printing technology" (ibid). Hence both the delay in taking action against *al-Hilal*, which combined political polemic and religious fervour in its coverage of the Balkan and first world wars, and the effectiveness of levying an additional deposit in forcing it to shut down.

From its first edition onwards *al-Hilal* had adopted an openly partisan stance towards Turkey, and its editor's partisanship was not confined to the pages of his newspaper. In February 1913 Azad raised Rs 30,000 in support of Turkey during a meeting held in Calcutta (Datta 1990: 73), and in the *al-Hilal* of 27 May 1914 he announced that out of the annual subscription of eight rupees and fifty paise of his newspaper, seven rupees and fifty paise would go towards a Turkish fund. In 1913, alarmed by the pro-German tone of its

editorials, the Government of India had demanded a security deposit of Rs 2,000 and in response to the double edition described in *The Pioneer*, forfeited this and claimed a further sum of Rs 10,000, causing *al-Hilal* to cease production. The last edition of its first iteration was published on 18 November 1914. Azad was to publish another magazine a year later under the name of *al-Balagh*, which had an even more pronounced religious emphasis. But this ceased publication within a year after Azad was expelled from Bengal and moved to the State of Bihar. Later, in 1927, *al-Hilal* resumed publication in Delhi, but it was to cease publication within six months, and neither of these later publications matched the success of the early *al-Hilal*.

The sudden and expedient religiosity of Azad's stance in the first outing of *al-Hilal* has encouraged scepticism about its sincerity. Douglas notes an abrupt shift in the tone of Azad's writings, from the crisis of faith described in his autobiographical writing to the "intensely religious" *al-Hilal*, although he dismisses accusations that this was a result of opportunism on Azad's part (1988: 102). Aijaz Ahmad has also remarked upon the discontinuities between Azad's essay on the transgressive life of a Sufi saint in *Hayat-i Sarmad* in 1910 and *al-Hilal* in 1912, and dates the beginning of what he describes as Azad's pious phase from the latter (2001: 125). Whereas Datta sees no contradiction between the two "phases" (1990: 50), and has a pragmatic view of his use of religion. When it came to the instrumentalisation of religions, Azad, like Gandhi, had no choice:

> The question was how to rally people for a cause and the use of religion was considered by far the easiest and most effective weapon for uniting people and making them fight against foreign rule. The religious idiom was a legacy of the nineteenth century Indian Renaissance, a consequence of the historical process which could not be reversed. An egg once scrambled cannot be unscrambled!
> (ibid: 84)

In referring to the nineteenth century "Indian Renaissance", Datta is speaking of socio-religious reform movements, of all denominations, which developed as a result of the activities of missionaries and the colonial state. The Khilafat agitation was also a key moment in the rapprochement between these different religious groups in the Indian

nationalist movement. Both Hindus and Muslims came together in the space left to them by colonial restrictions on political activity, in order to oppose British rule through support for the Ottoman Caliph. Various Indian rulers, from the Mughals to the British, had used the Caliph's special significance as a "symbol of Muslim unity and the supremacy of the *shari'a*" (Minault 1982: 4-5) to galvanise support for their regimes. In times of strife, in particular, he was important as a source of legitimacy and solidarity between "the ruler, the ulama, and the nobility" (ibid: 5). This attitude had been encouraged by the Ottoman sultan, Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909) and his "chief propagandist" Jamal-uddin al-Afghani (1838-97) (ibid: 6), and taken on a revolutionary cast in recent times.

The novelty and potential danger of these political realignments were noted by the writer of the Daily Report of the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, for 11 September 1914, which describes how apparent Muslim support for the Germans can only be understood by reference to events preceding the war; in particular, communal representation in the new Councils and drives to remedy the perceived educational "backwardness" of Muslims.[35] This "awakening" is said to have produced a new generation of political leaders and primed them for a more radical politics. Provoked by "the troubles which have befallen the Muslim world", they are said to be imitating "Hindu methods" in pressing "what they consider to be claims of the community by active agitation". They are said to have acquired "a ready means of inflaming the masses" through the "new Muhammadan press", and of these papers the tone of *al-Hilal* is said to be "particularly bad". There is said to now be "a definitely acknowledged young party which seeks to thrust the older more cautious men into the background".

In the report's reference to the older, more moderate generation can be discerned an allusion to the reformist tradition of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817 – 1898), who had been hostile to the pro-Khilafat sentiment in the late nineteenth century, responding with a series of articles written at the conclusion of the Greco-Turkish War in 1897. These were collected

[35] National Archives of India, Home, Political A, November 1914, Nos. 33-38.

together and published by Siraj-ud-din Ahmed, an Indian Muslim Barrister, in 1916 and 1920, with the intention of refuting the messages of those who were seeking to "misguide the ignorant Mussalman masses of the country" (Ahmed 1920: ii). (His preface makes particular mention of a booklet by "Maulvi Abulkalam Azad of Calcutta" [ibid].) Sayyid Ahmad Khan cautions Indian Muslims against overstepping the bounds of moderation in their joy at the defeat of Greece. They are to remember that as subjects of the British government they cannot act contrary to its wishes. He emphasises that "Khilafat" simply means successor, and does not carry the weight of the term "Pope" for Roman Catholics. Only a person who resembles the Prophet, spiritually and morally, and who is at the same time ruler of a country, can call himself an Imam or Khalifa, and even then his jurisdiction is limited to his own countrymen. Any other Muslim ruler is a mere "Sultan". Therefore "Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan cannot be Khalifa for the Indian Mussalmans", who are subjects of the British Government (ibid: 17).

During this period, Ahmad Khan dealt with the problem of defining the boundaries of the people by upholding the colonial distinction between religion and politics, thereby delimiting the authority of the Ottoman caliphate and emphasising the subject position of Indian Muslims. In this way he staked his claim to be an intercessor for the Indian Muslim community he was in the process of ventriloquizing for the colonial state. Building upon this legacy, Azad would go on to overstep these boundaries in his pursuit of a broader constituency as an Indian Muslim leader and a nationalist statesmen, an 'Imam ul-Hind'. More generally, by mobilizing a "united, pan-Islamic Muslim constituency" (Minault 1982: 2), the Khilafat movement sought to reconstitute the nationalist movement by involving Indian Muslims in it on more equal terms. In the early twentieth century the increasingly embattled caliphate became not just a symbol of unity but of "Islam in danger", with special significance for Muslims in India who identified with the declining Mughal ruling elite, and the leadership of the Khilafat movement came from this group. Support for the Khilafat

therefore marks a significant shift away from the reformism of an earlier school and towards a more militant type of political engagement, with ramifications for how the 'qaum' would be imagined.

But the Khilafat leadership was not a homogenous group, and Azad, in particular, is something of an outlier within it, not being affiliated to any of the schools with which most of its leaders were associated; namely: the Aligarh Movement, the Dar al-Ulum Deoband and Farangi Mahal madrassas, and therefore not fitting within the pattern of those who entered politics because of "institutional rivalries and the quest for followers in that framework" (Minault 1982: 45). This ambivalent relationship with the ulama, and his own leadership ambitions can be discerned in both the style and content of his editorials in *al-Hilal*, written in prose laden with Persian and Arabic words, and sometimes even, in his fatiha (opening) editorials, entirely in Arabic. Douglas argues that this "stylistic affectation" was primarily addressed to the ulama, and indicates that he still identified with them. Although he was careful to distinguish between "the true and the false among them", he continued to portray the ulama, of past times at least, as "profound scholars of philosophy and history" to western-educated readers (1988: 103). Minault has suggested that his accommodation to them arose out of a pragmatic assessment that he "had to be accepted among them in order to lead them along new intellectual and political paths" (1982: 41-42).

He could be therefore be seen as working within the tradition of what Francis Robinson has described as "Muslim Protestantism", for whom "the route to survival" in a colonial context was "scriptural knowledge, knowledge of the Quran, and the traditions, and how to be a Muslim" (1996: 73). This knowledge could be disseminated through a school system, such as Deoband, but it could also be individually accessed through print, with the latter eventually eroding the authority of the former by breaking "the stranglehold" of the ulama on the oral transmission of Islamic knowledge (ibid: 76). Because of his extra-mural position as a journalist/statesman, rather than a full-fledged member of the ulama, Azad

was open to diverse influences: reformist, revolutionary, English, non-Western and non-Indian, and therefore capable of invoking both pan-Islamic and cross-denominational notions of 'the people'. For this reason he is a key figure in the dawn of the non-cooperation movement, when the Independence struggle would become a mass and national movement. Through his deployment of print and prophetic speech, he participated in a shift from a reformist to a revolutionary Indian Muslim politics, and sought to position himself at the apex of this movement.

Print, as has often been noted, came relatively 'late' to the 'Muslim world' and India (Carter 1925; Graham 1987; Robinson 1993 and 1996), and has even, contentiously, been described as a less significant innovation than the manuscript in South Asia (Pollock 2007). Its belated introduction in North Indian local languages has been attributed to the East India Company's policy of non-interference in religious matters, which led it to forbid missionary activities within its territories until 1813 (Stark 2007: 37). Before the 1800s most Urdu books published in India were printed in Nastaliq (ibid: 38), but even after moveable type printing in the more adaptable Naskh character was introduced by the missionary press, lithographic printing and Nastaliq continued to predominate. Graham Shaw observes that whilst for the first two and a half centuries of its use, "typography had no impact at all upon the overwhelming majority of the population", remaining almost exclusively the preserve of Europeans, within a decade of its introduction to India "widespread ownership of presses by Indians themselves began" (1998: 89). Cheap, portable and relatively easy to use, lithography played a significant role in "democratizing print in South Asia" (ibid). Lithography became "the printing medium par excellence of the Muslim communities in South Asia for its ability to make possible the 'mass-produced manuscript', which met the criteria of cultural authority which the type-set text could not" (ibid: 89). That is, a person-to-person transmission, which would preserve the authentic meaning of a text in the absence of the original author.

But there were also technical reasons for this preference. Nastaliq, the cursive script in which Urdu is most commonly written, is hard to accurately typeset, meaning that most Urdu newspapers continued to be lithographed until Urdu InPage software was developed in 1994. The first Urdu computer font was invented by Ahmed Mirza Jamil in 1981, who had been inspired by a Chinese character keyboard he had seen at an exhibition in Singapore (Kashfi 2008: 12). But a complicated user interface and incompatibility with standard word processing packages meant that it was not widely used, in India at least.

A memorial volume on Ahmed Mirza Jamil claims that his invention brought about a revolution in Urdu printing. Whereas previously up to 100 calligraphers would labour through the night to produce a single edition of newspaper, now it could be produced digitally (ibid). The Pakistani newspaper *Jang* is said to have adopted this technology to print its Lahore edition, but, from what I have seen of newspaper archives in India, it does not seem to have been much used there before the invention of InPage. Even the Congress party paper *Qaumi Awaz*, one of the most widely distributed and best-resourced Urdu papers of its time, continued to be lithographed into the 1990s. Azad was therefore making a statement in choosing to publish his newspaper on a type press in Naskh font in 1912, and this was partly because of his exposure to typeset editions of Sir Sayyid's work, and also a response to what he had seen of the Arab press.

Malihabadi's as-told-to account of Azad's life describes how Azad acquired a taste for type from reading printed editions of Sayyid Ahmad Khan's collected religious writings as a boy. He is said to have made efforts to acquire these particular editions rather than the lithographed copies that were made after they were published (2008: 156). With financial assistance from his father's disciples he was able to set up a high quality type press, using technology imported from Turkey, capable of reproducing half-tone pictures on the "best quality paper", which is said to have exceeded the standards of certain Indian English papers

in terms of production values, and the Urdu press, in its literary style (Douglas 1988: 99). In *India Wins Freedom* Azad writes:

> There were a number of dailies, weeklies and monthlies published in Urdu from the Punjab and the UP but their standard was not very high. Their get up and printing were as poor as their contents. They were produced by the lithographic process and could not therefore embody any of the features of modern journalism. Nor were they able to print half-tone pictures. I decided that my journal should be attractive in get up and powerful in its appeal. It must be set up in type and reproduced by the lithographic process.
> (1989: 8)

This willingness to sacrifice mobility and ease of production for "attractive" and "powerful" presentation suggests that Azad may have been less interested in being read than in creating an impressive impact.

The early editions of *al-Hilal* repeatedly draw attention to the magazine's use of type and half-tone photography. The first edition (13 July 1912) discusses at length the difficulties that have beset its production, and apologises for its poor quality. Due to production difficulties, the entire magazine could not be printed in the specially imported Turkish type, as had been promised in announcements for *al-Hilal*. But the editor promises that these faults will be fixed in the coming weeks. The second edition (20 July 1912) details the different formats of newspapers (daily, weekly, fortnightly and monthly) and provides a brief history of printing in eastern nations, in which the editor regrets that because of a lingering attachment to stone lithography, there is no Nastaliq equivalent to the beautiful Naskh type produced in Turkey and Egypt, in which Arabic and Persian newspapers are printed. These discussions contextualize his choice to publish a weekly magazine rather than a daily newspaper, and to print it in Naskh type imported from Turkey. He draws attention to the superior type in which *al-Hilal* is produced, and claims it is much better than that produced from Allahabad and Calcutta.

In an addendum to this edition, the magazine's superior production values are said to justify its relatively expensive price, which he claims would be unexceptional for a similar quality English paper. If *al-Hilal* were in English, an annual subscription would cost one

guinea and be cheap at the price. Urdu readers have got into the habit of paying no more than three or four rupees for an annual subscription to a magazine, but most of these papers are printed using litho press and inexpensive paper, and are often un-illustrated. Although *al-Hilal's* annual subscription is eight rupees, this is not excessive, given the expense and effort put into its production. With a cover price of fifteen rupees there would be some hope of recovering expenses, but because the real purpose of the magazine is to raise a countrywide movement, and without producing numerous editions this would be impossible, the additional expense has been overlooked.

Although Azad's name does not appear on the first page of these editions as it does in later ones, through the direct address of these editorials he makes his presence felt and conjures an audience, whom he addresses as "nazrin" ("viewer") and "pablik" ("public") rather than reader. Use of the former term indicates that he is keyed to the visual appeal of his journal as much as its written content. Discussion of letters he has received and editorials written in response to them further underline his presence; notably, in the editorial that appears in *al-Hilal* of 8 September 1912, written in response to a senior friend's enquiries about the political purpose of the newspaper: "Al-hilal ki politikal ta'lim ki nisbat ek khat aur us ka jawab" ("With regard to al-Hilal's political education: a letter and its reply"). The text of the letter is reproduced, accompanied by a lengthy reply by Azad, in which he both asserts and downplays his knowledge of Arabic, religious learning and possession of a good library, and emphasizes that the authority of his paper's political policy is solely based in the teachings of the Quran. According to its teachings, there is no need to pay obeisance to the colonial state or submit to the Hindus.

Through these interventions Azad attempts to retain something of the person-to-person mode of transmission, and to thereby partake in some of the religious legitimacy associated with this mode of address. In his intellectual biography of Azad, Douglas describes how during the Khilafat struggle, from 1910 until his imprisonment in 1921, he had

thought of himself as “some kind of mujaddid or imam, whom God would vindicate in the way He vindicated the prophets” (1988: 97). The title of ‘Imam ul-Hind’ was semi-officially bestowed by the mysterious figure of the Sheikh ul-Islam, but its legitimacy (and, come to that, the legitimacy of Sheikh ul-Islam’s own title) was disputable, with it remaining unclear what binding force it would have at any level.

Azad was more securely located in the emergent type of “the professional politician in India, part journalist, part orator, part holy man” (Minault 1982: 3), and in his childhood he had found a model in Sir Sayyid, whose works he had admired for both their modern format and unorthodox content. In *India Wins Freedom* he describes how Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s controversial commentary on the Quran, which had been condemned by much of the ulama, led him to question his traditional education, and it may well have influenced his own later Quranic commentaries in *al-Hilal* and the *Tarjuman al-Quran*. But he would in turn become dissatisfied with Sir Sayyid’s political conservatism, and incorporate a wider range of influences, available to him through his background and residence in Calcutta during a time of political ferment.

Born in Mecca to the Sufi pir, Shaikh Muhammad Khairuddin Dehlavi, and an Arab mother, he was fluent in Arabic and maintained a connection with the language and its literature even after his family returned to India in the mid-1890s. As a child in Calcutta he had come across works by Shaikh Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905) and the Egyptian journal *al-Manar* published by ‘Abdhuh’s disciple Rashid Rida (1865-1935), and in this way come to know about new religious and educational ideas in the Arabic-speaking world (Minault 1982: 39). When Rida visited Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow in 1912 Azad translated his speech into Urdu and afterwards published a series of articles in the first three issues of *al-Hilal* (*al-Hilal* 13, 21 and 28 July 1912). In him, he found something of a model of a newspaperman/holy man, an alternative to the reformist legacy of Sir Sayyid.

The full-page portrait of Rashid Rida on the frontispiece of the first edition of *al-Hilal*, with further portraits of Jamal uddin al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh inside, establishes a lineage with thinkers who had earlier on and in different contexts grappled with the questions of religio-political reform. His early exposure to the work of Arab reformists had been reinforced by subsequent travels to the Middle East and Europe in the early 1900s, although the extent and even the precise dates of these have been disputed. Some writers have made much of Azad's brief mention of them in his autobiography (1989: 6-7). Rajat Ray, for example, claims that their importance "cannot be emphasized too heavily", and that after identifying himself "emotionally and intellectually with the Islamic world of the Turk, the Arabs and the Iranians", Azad had brought back a message of national liberation for "his own people back in India" (1981: 89). Aijaz Ahmad has questioned the dates given in Azad's account of them in his autobiographical writings (2001: 147-148), and Minault argues that most of his knowledge of these regions was derived from his readings of 'Abduh, Rida and possibly Afghani (1982: 40). But in an essay on the difficulties inherent in writing Azad's biography, she concludes that Azad did not have to visit the Arab world in order to become aware of the intellectual developments there (2001: 22). For his purposes an "imaginative journey was perhaps more useful", as it would have allowed him to "synthesise" ideas from there with his own experience, to make analogies that would resonate with other Indian Muslims (ibid). Notably this involved imaginative *synthesis* rather than simple derivation; assimilation of diverse influences would inform a shift away from the avowedly apolitical reformist tradition, towards a revolutionary politics that would include the 'masses' and non-Muslims.

These images of Rida, 'Abduh and Afghani are also significant because of their use of the leveling gaze of the camera. In the early editions of *al-Hilal* there is almost as much discussion of the journal's use of half-tone photographic reproduction as there is of its use of Naskh type. The halftone, a printed image in which the tones of a photograph are converted

into a grid of high-contrast dots, helped facilitate mass production of photographic images around the turn of the twentieth century. These images were often disseminated through the medium of magazines, which, in terms of expense, longevity and reach, bridged the gap between the newspaper and the book. Whereas newspapers were "local events" and books were published in modest print runs, magazines could adjust the size of their runs "to a growing national audience" (Benson 2008: 224). Through the medium of weekly magazines in particular, the industrialized world was "quickly wrapped in cheap photographs printed as ink halftones" (ibid).

The 4 August 1912 edition pre-empts assumptions that the mixed quality of the pictures in *al-Hilal* is a result of incompetence and inexperience. The editor assures the reader that whilst the production of *al-Hilal* has many shortcomings, which will hopefully be overcome in due course, the inconsistent quality of its pictures is not one of them. The best manufacturers of pictures in Calcutta have been entrusted with this job – and, needless to say, because Calcutta has the best in the country, this means the best in all of India. No trouble or expense has been spared. A special half tone printing machine has been purchased, one capable of the delicate task of printing photographs. More than this, what can be done? Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly the case that certain pictures have not come out clearly, and the reason for this is that the original itself was not good. For example, in the first edition the pictures of 'Abduh, Afghani and Rida were of very good quality, because the originals were well prepared. But those of the battle of Tripoli were poor and therefore reproduced badly. There is no question of one being good and the other bad, although the viewer would not be aware of this, would have no idea of the time and trouble it takes to make these pictures print-worthy through retouching. As with the discussion of Naskh type, during such moments Azad steps beyond the proscenium arch in order to inform the public/viewer about the production process, and therefore encourage him to value the paper more highly. (This would also fit with the need to justify *al-Hilal's* relatively high cost.)

Perhaps even to produce an *ideal* reader for the journal, one who would be attentive to details of tone and type and aware of the difficulties involved in the magazine's production.

Al-Hilal's deliberate use of photography also partakes in the reimagining of collectivities and undoing of the self-presentations of the colonial state. The photographic portraits of Rida, 'Abduh and Afghani, and depictions of the Balkan conflict and World War One, extend Robinson's arguments about the "symbiotic relationship between the growth of pan-Islamic consciousness and the growth of the press" (1996: 73-74) into the area of visual media. The techno-material constraints of portrait photography, which best lends itself to "photographing individuals (or, at a pinch, couples)" shifted the focus away from the standard "collective expressions of social solidarities" of colonial taxonomy – caste, religious and occupational groups (Pinney 2008: 109-10). These portraits, instead, "reflected the aesthetic force that single bodies – as opposed to multiple bodies – were able to deposit in the image" (ibid: 110). Something of this force can arguably be seen in the portraits of 'Abduh, Rida and Afghani, who have been selected as exemplary Muslim leaders and reformists, their pictures, accompanied by detailed accounts of their well-travelled and interconnected lives and ideas, do more than illustrate a particular 'type'; or at least, not a particular type of *Indian* Muslim.

Hourani describes a photograph of 'Abduh taken on the terrace of the House of Commons when he visited Britain in 1884, which shows "a handsome man, well built, dark of complexion, with a tranquil and almost melancholy charm that does not quite conceal the look of conviction in his eyes" (1983: 135), and Buessow (2014) has illuminatingly described the circumstances in which it was taken. 'Abduh had been invited to London by the anti-imperialist activist, Wilfred Scawen Blunt, to give a report on the political situation in Egypt. Blunt is said to have been concerned about 'Abduh's "Europeanized appearance" acquired during exile in Beirut and Paris, where he had lived "a cosmopolitan life as a high school teacher, journalist and intellectual", growing his hair long and wearing a fez (ibid: 273). Blunt

encouraged him to present himself to the House of Commons in more appropriate attire, a blue gown and white turban, in order to create "a more persuasive appearance as a speaker for Egypt and the Muslim word" (ibid: 274). This strategy is said to have been successful, with 'Abduh's appearance causing "'quite a sensation' in the lobby of the parliament" (ibid). From this incident Buessow proceeds to outline his argument about the modern concept of "religions" only gaining currency in the Middle East during "the first modern wave of globalization", along a "'Protestant template'" transmitted to the Middle East through printed publications and interactions with European thinkers. This "globalization perspective" is said to be more adequate to understanding cultural transfers than the paradigm of "'Westernization'" (ibid).

But images of the turbaned 'Abdu, Ridah and Afghani in the pages of *al-Hilal* also remind us of the 'South-South' aspect of these global transfers, and of the importance of visual media, exemplified by the different significance of this headgear in an Indian context. Whereas in other colonised countries the turban and the hat might have been effective in "demarcating a boundary between ruler and ruled", they did not as easily serve this function in India, where Hindus also wore turbans (Pernau 2010: 262). The turban is said to have lost its status as courtly headgear during the reign of Akbar (1542-1605), and to have returned to prominence from the mid-eighteenth century, with the advent of a "new age of religiosity" based on "literal reading of the canonical texts" (ibid: 260). During the latter period, wearing a turban would demonstrate membership of the pious "new middle class" rather than hark back to a Central Asian homeland (ibid: 262).

The fez may have originally been intended to obscure ethnic and religious differences within the Ottoman bureaucracy, becoming obligatory for its officers in 1829, but it was to acquire religious symbolism when the sultan began to assert his position as 'universal Caliph' and claim allegiance from Muslims all around the world. Within India, the fez met the need for a type of headgear which distinguished Muslims from both Hindus and

the British, whilst being "close enough to the Western hat not to offend the colonizers' taste and susceptibilities" (ibid: 264). It is thus said to have allowed them to participate in both "global modernity, epitomised by their British rulers", and "an Islamic world-system", albeit one centred in Istanbul (ibid). It was adopted as such by Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh movement, and was later, for entirely different reasons, to become more widely diffused across India by the Khilafat movement, becoming the iconic headwear of Abul Kalam Azad himself.

Post-Independence the image of a fez wearing Muslim was to become a cliché of national integration posters, despite the fact that it is rarely encountered in India. The historian Shahid Amin describes such stereotypical images as belonging to "a larger process of 'fabrications' of the past" by which groups make their history (2006: 7), and speaks with some ambivalence about this process. He acknowledges that "the man in the street is no less an abstraction than the one stuck on the billboard", but also notes that the word 'fabricate' contains a suggestion of forgery as well as, more neutrally, construction, manufacture and invention (ibid: 8-9). Amin's discussion of the 'topoi of the topi' highlights one of the strongest aspects of Anderson's concept of imagined communities. Whilst Anderson also believes in the novelty of the nation, he differs from 'blank-slate' understandings of nation-state formation in 'pre-modern' cultures by arguing that it was *imagined* rather than fabricated, which allows greater scope for the creativity of national peoples. Indians who adopted the cause of the Khilafat movement may have been blind to developments in the Ottoman Empire – Arab nationalist and Kemalist Turk rejection of the caliphate which would result in its downfall. But, misguided as it was, the movement was to have profound political effects, and effects that were not confined to Indian Muslims.

Returning to the photographs of the turbaned 'Abduh et al, presented as potential models for emulation, they partake in what Pinney describes as the contrast between "photography as the documenter of what has already been achieved socially, and as a space

of experimentation where new identities can be conjured" (2008: 145). This is said to be made possible by "photography's indiscriminating data ratio", its capacity to record both equally well, and to therefore allow "powerfully different expectations":

> Photography's indexicality, its chemical trace, its data ratio, has underpinned the dualities I have elaborated here: cure *and* poison; network *and* individuation; the already existent *and* the future possibility. All these evolve from and return to photography's inability to discriminate, its *exorbitance*.
> (ibid.)

This exorbitance is said to be precisely what Sir Sayyid, by contrast, objected to about "the sumna bonum of nineteenth-century Indian colonial photography, *The People of India*" (ibid: 39), which he encountered in the India Office Library in London, as he was in the process of collecting material for a book on Islam. His response was not based in any objection to modern printing technology per se, which he had used to print his own works, nor to illustration. Cf. the more than 130 illustrations that accompanied the first Persian edition of his book on Delhi's history, *Asar-al-Sanadid* (traces of the nobles), which according to C.M. Naim are the "most striking feature of the book" (2010: 7). He describes these as "among the first lithographically produced book illustrations in India" and as showing "how readily Delhi craftsmen of the time took up new techniques and soon excelled at them" (ibid: 7). But neither aura nor authority are threatened by these representations of Delhi's monuments.

In his famous 15 October 1869 letter from London, which was sent to the Scientific Society of Aligarh and published in the Aligarh Institute Gazette, Sayyid Ahmad Khan describes the objectionable work:

> In the India Office is a book in which the races of all India are depicted in both pictures and in letterpress, giving the manners and customs of each race. Their photographs show that the pictures of the different manners and customs were taken on the spot, and the sight of them shows how savage they are – the equals of animals. The young Englishman who, after passing the preliminary Civil Service examination, have to pass examinations on special subjects for two years afterwards, come to the India Office preparatory to starting for India, and, desirous of knowing something of the land to which they are going, also look over this work. What can they think, after perusing this book and looking at its pictures, of the power and honour of the natives of India?
> (In Graham 1974: 129)

Pinney points out that Sayyid Ahmad Khan would probably have agreed with the critical assessments of the declining Mughal elite in the captions to their photographs, and argues that his reaction "was a response not simply to the ideological slant of this or that caption, but rather to the systematic normalising and rendering visible of diverse communities within a unitary framework" (2010: 44). His opposition to this sort of photographic representation could be seen to be of a piece with his opposition to competitive examinations for government posts and elections to legislative assemblies on a proportional basis. All of these forms of representation partook of an 'exorbitance' which was potentially threatening to the colonial state and those who set themselves up in relation to it.

But his response to these images is also the obverse of his admiring descriptions, in the same letter, of the maid-servant in his London residence, who is capable of reading a half-penny newspaper and enjoying the editorials in *Punch* magazine, or the coachmen who keep a book under the seat of their cabs to read during idle moments (in Graham 1974: 131-132). He attributes the advanced state of England's civilization to the *uniformity* of the language of the country, and recommends that Indians translate the whole of the arts and sciences into their own languages: "Until the education of the masses is pushed on as it is here, it is impossible for a native to be civilised and honoured" (ibid: 132). His objection therefore also seems to be directed at the heterogeneous groupings of India's diverse peoples within the pages of a book, to what Rancière has described as "literarity": the disequilibrium induced by "word-islands" that "re-carve [redécoupent] the space that is between bodies and that regulates their community" (2004: 103). In this instance, a disturbing proximity which leads Ahmad Khan's son, who has accompanied him to the India Office, to assert his foreign origins to a young Englishman who asks him whether he is "Hindustani":

> Mahmud replied in the affirmative, but blushed as he did so, and hastened to explain that he was not one of the aborigines, but that his ancestors were formerly of another country. Reflect, therefore, that until Hindustanis remove this blot they shall never be held in honour by any civilised race.

(In Graham 1974: 129)

Photography also played an important role in puncturing this myth of civilizational superiority. As cameras became cheaper and smaller, photography was decreasingly reliant on official support or financial investment. As a result its subject matter changed from "the Himalayan foothills", which Pinney describes as the paradigmatic location of nineteenth century colonial photography, to the street (2008: 82). This mobile photographic technology was more easily able to document the "increasingly chaotic public spaces in which colonial hegemony appeared increasingly fragile" (ibid: 83). Pinney illustrates this with the example of the photographic depictions of the Amritsar massacre in India, but during the extensively reported and photographed Balkan and First World Wars these examples could be found further afield. Colonial hegemony was indirectly attacked by slurs cast against Britain's allies, as exemplified by the photograph of the sleeping Belgian soldiers, which had been the focus of objections to the censored edition of *al-Hilal*. These sorts of images are foreshadowed by earlier unflattering depictions of European forces during the Balkan war. The 17 August 1912 edition has a photo of pit-helmeted Italian soldiers attempting to push a recalcitrant horse and cart. A couple of soldiers are arranged outside the picture frame, which along with the deadpan caption ("In Tripoli: The Difficulties Faced by the Italians") adds to the comedy of the scene. Elsewhere, photography is used to highlight imperial excesses in a story dealing with the hanging of two Turks by Bulgarian forces after the siege of Adrianople (*al-Hilal*, 8 January 1913). Under the main title "Notable Events in the Balkan war" are two cameo photographs of the men, hooded and hanging by their necks. The article is said to be an eyewitness account of these bloody events by an anonymous correspondent, which has been translated into Urdu in London. The dignified and pious behaviour of the condemned men, whose last wish was to perform namaz, and the gruesome preparations for their deaths, illustrated by photographs in the right and left hand panels, are contrasted with the high spirits of the Bulgarian troops.

A great deal of space in *al-Hilal* may have been devoted to coverage of events in the Ottoman empire, but these reports were written with the concerns of Indian Muslims in mind, and therefore fit with Azad's later nationalist political activity. His account of the Italian attack on Tripoli has clear parallels with imperial expansion in India, and connections between the two were sometimes made in his coverage of local issues. These are explicit in his coverage of local authority encroachment upon a mosque in the north Indian city of Kanpur. This local event acquired a wider significance because of the way it was written about in the Muslim press; that is, papers written in Urdu and English, produced by and addressing a Muslim audience (Lavan 1973). The story ran in *al-Hilal* for many months from 11 June 1913 onwards. When police fired against demonstrators, killing several on 3 August 1913, Azad responded in the 13 August 1913 edition of *al-Hilal* with an article titled "A Painful Glimpse of Edirne in Kanpur", in reference to the Turkish town (Adrianople) which had been occupied during the Balkan war in that same year. In its report on this event, *al-Hilal* weaves a local story which had gained national significance into the international:

> The earth is thirsty. It needs blood. But whose? That of Muslims. West Asia is adorned [rangin] with whose blood? Muslims. On the soil [khak] of Iran, whose bodies are writhing? Muslims. In the Balkan region whose blood is flowing? Muslims. The soil of Hindustan is also thirsty. She needs blood. Whose? Muslims. At last, in the environs of Kanpur blood flows and the earth of Hindustan is intoxicated.

Such passages seem to substantiate criticism of Azad of the *al-Hilal* period's "thick streak of Muslim separatism" (Ashraf 2001: 108). Communal tensions do seem to have been an important context for the strong response to the demolition. (A temple had originally been scheduled to be demolished instead, but this decision had been revoked.) But the rhetorical devices in this passage bear comparison with the 'cosmo-politics' of the Hindu-nationalist inflected discourses of the Independence movement, as described by Pinney's article on the unintended effects of the 1910 Press Act. Specifically, to its use of allegorical and mythological devices:

> The past became part of a present, and correspondences between past and present became significant. Coincidence and accident were replaced in this new historiography by resonance

> and significance. History and present-day events became parallel systems with a converging significance.
> (2009: 32)

Pushed into the same socio-religious space, and into using the same tropes, those who opposed British rule were driven to be more militant *and* more indirect. Similarities with what the Calcutta Police Commissioner had described as "Hindu" methods of protest can be seen in both the demonstrations and the coverage of them in "the new Mohammadan press", the allusive use of words and images as colonial censorship increasingly began to take its toll.

There is also a strong chance that a number of the readers of *al-Hilal* would have been non-Muslim (a possibility expressed in S.P. Sanyal's letter to *The Pioneer*). Because of Azad's subsequent involvement in the Indian Independence movement *al-Hilal* has come to acquire the status of a nationalist journal. Nehru writes in *Discovery of India* of how Azad addressed his Muslim readers in a "new language" and indirectly "attacked the stronghold of conservatism and anti-nationalism" by spreading ideas which undermined the Aligarh tradition (1959: 267-268). In *India Wins Freedom* Azad describes how *al-Hilal* intended to build up public opinion, which would encompass non-Muslims, and even speaks of a mass readership:

> The publication of *Al Hilal* marks a turning point in the history of Urdu journalism. It achieved unprecedented popularity within a short time. The public was attracted not only by the superior printing and production of the paper but even more by the new note of strong nationalism preached by it. *Al Hilal* created a revolutionary stir among the masses. The demand for *Al Hilal* was so great that within the first three months, all the old issues had to be reprinted as every subscriber wanted the entire set.
> (1989: 8)

This does not accord with the chaste Urdu in which the paper was written, which would have been unlikely to have had mass appeal in this period of mass illiteracy. Even if the newspaper had been read aloud, as was common practice then and now, it is questionable how much of its language would have been understood by most Hindi and Urdu speakers. Nor does it reflect the Muslim readership addressed in editorials on the status of Muslims in India and around the world. Through his newspaper Azad stakes his claim as a mujtahid *and*

political leader of the largest 'minority' community in India. It is possible that these features and his position as newspaper editor would have earned some cachet amongst people who would have been unable to read his newspaper, but would have been aware of it, a group that could encompass Muslims who were not part of the ulama and non-Muslims.

There is some evidence that even at this time he made attempts to reach out to Hindu militants. From Azad's account of his involvement with these groups in his autobiography, Rajat Ray claims that he was able to span three types of underground secret political activity in Calcutta between 1905 and 1925, namely: "revolutionary terrorism, pan-Islamic societies, and Bolsheviks" (1981: 85). However, as with his international travels, the extent of these links is unclear. According to Ray, "these activities were so carefully hidden from the public view that they have not left much trace in historical accounts of revolutionary nationalism in India" (ibid: 92). Azad himself writes that following the assumption of the pen-name "Azad" ("free"), he had experienced a severing of all conventional ties, and become politicized by the partition of Bengal in 1905, which he describes as a bid by Curzon to "create permanent division between the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal" (1989: 4). As a result, Bengal had become "politically the most advanced part of India, and the Hindus of Bengal had taken a leading part in Indian political awakening" (ibid). He claims to have joined one of these revolutionary groups and in doing so, to have overcome their anti-Muslim prejudice:

> I began to argue with them that they were wrong in thinking that Muslims as a community were their enemies. I told them that they should not generalise from their experiences of a few Muslim officers in Bengal. In Egypt, Iran and Turkey the Muslims were engaged in revolutionary activities for the achievement of democracy and freedom. The Muslims of India would also join in the political struggle if we worked among them and tried to win them as our friends.
> (ibid: 5)

Again, this is inconsistent with his writings in the pages of *al-Hilal*. In the earlier mentioned editorial of 8 September 1912, in which he outlines the political purpose of his journal, he urges Muslims to abjure the path of both moderate and extremist Hindus. They are not to

forget that a true Muslim holds the Quran in his hand, and a hand that holds a Quran cannot hold a bomb.

Regardless of how retrospective these accounts of his involvement in revolutionary activity may be, they mark a shift from Sir Sayyid's hostility to both Hindu and Muslim Bengalis. In a defensive review of Hunter's *Indian Musalmans: Are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* he insists that Hunter's argument is invalidated by a narrow focus upon "Bengal Mahomedans" (Khan 1872: 7). "As a cosmopolitan Mahomedan of India", he writes, "I must raise my voice in opposition to Dr. Hunter in defence of my fellow-countrymen" (ibid). Writing in English ("corrected by a friend" according to the title page) he uses the word "countrymen" to refer to co-religionists across India, and stakes his authority to do so in his "cosmopolitan" (foreign) origins.

Ahmad Khan's hostility is even clearer in his contemptuous references to the prospect of Bengali Hindu rule in the event of the introduction of competitive examinations for government posts, as demanded by Congress: "Over all races, not only over Mahomedans but over Rajas of high position and the brave Rajputs who have not forgotten the swords of their ancestors, would be placed as ruler a Bengali who at sight of a table knife would crawl under his chair" (Khan 1888: 11). In this speech, he dismisses the Congress agitation as a Bengali phenomenon, which in that province safely confines itself to "writing with the pen" and "mere talking", to "*giz*, *giz*, *giz*, *giz*, *giz*" and "*buk*, *buk*, *buk*, *buk*", as he expresses it for the amusement of his Lucknow audience (ibid: 18). Were it to spread to "Mahomedans and other brave races", he warns, the Government would need "to pass a new law and to fill the jails" (ibid: 19).

It is it notable that even here the term Ahmad Khan uses to refer to Hindu Bengalis in the Urdu original is "qaum" (Sevea 2012: 153), which, as discussed earlier, is potentially much more capacious than 'race'. At the same time as expressing his prejudice he opens up the possibility of encompassing non-Muslims within a 'qaum', a manouevre whose

potentialities would be realized in the Khilafat movement. Even in the first iteration of *al-Hilal*, published on the cusp of this movement, Hindu revolutionary activities form the context for Azad's discussion of the necessity to adopt jihad in order to pursue Independence, when he criticises Muslim leaders, such as Sir Sayyid, who counseled quietism and loyalty, leaving Hindus to take the lead in the struggle for independence (*al-Hilal* 18 December 1912). By fusing pan-Islamism and anti-British sentiment, and thereby extending the boundaries of the 'qaum' through deployment of cosmopolitics and cosmopolitan politics, Azad effects an innovation. He attempts to ventriloquise both a pan-Islamic *and* pan-national community of readers by moving around various sociotechnical constraints, between a spiritual register and demotic concerns, a local and international politics, and even attempting to intertwine the two – *Hind* being an important component of the title 'Imam ul-Hind'.

Aziz Burney: *Azizul Hind*

One hundred years after the first release of *al-Hilal*, a newspaper with the curious title of *Azizul Hind* came into publication in 2013, an Urdu paper for the most part, but with certain sections translated into Hindi. The title of the paper draws upon the meanings of its editor, Aziz Burney's first name. "Aziz" is evocative of various kinds of love and esteem, and also indicates "a great man; a worthy or pious personage, a saint" (Platts 2006: 761); and "ul-Hind" recalls Azad's honourary title. When asked whether the last was a deliberate allusion, Burney smiled and allowed that it may have had some bearing upon the choice of name for his newspaper, but said its main purpose was to express his own love for India.[36] Through the title of his newspaper Burney sets himself up in a line of Indian Muslim leadership, and in relation to Azad in particular. This is not the first time in which he has done so. His 2005 collection of editorials on the Gujarat pogrom, *India Lose Freedom* (sic - 2005), directly

[36] Interview with Aziz Burney, Noida, 4 September 2014.

alludes to Azad's book on the Independence struggle with its title. More than his writing style or subject matter, the example of Azad can be seen to have shaped Burney's ambitions. As with Azad, these would seem to be quite grandiose, combining intimacy and prophecy:

> I talk with my readers. I don't think of them as readers. I think of myself as a member of their family, and just as on a daily basis one interacts with one's family members, in this way I am a family member who every morning over tea am with them…sometimes I will even be angry with them. Today itself I wrote that I am not participating in some mushaira [poetry recitation] in which it is your responsibility to clap hands and 'appreciate' and that is it! I don't need praise. I need revolution. If you are prepared to bring revolution then my writing is okay, it's good that I bring out my newspaper and you read it. It is meaningless if my writing is merely good and you enjoy reading it.[37]

Prior to setting up his own newspaper in 2013, Aziz Burney had been head of operations at Sahara Group Urdu Media. After joining its Hindi newspaper in 1991, he went on to launch monthly, weekly and daily Urdu periodicals in 1991, 1994 and 1999 respectively. *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* grew to become the most widely circulated daily Urdu newspaper in India, and is now published in ten editions, including one as far south as Bangalore. Burney is also a prolific writer in several languages and formats. He has published novels and books of non-fiction in Urdu, Hindi and English, and keeps a regularly updated multilingual blog. When I first spoke to him in the spring of 2011 he proudly mentioned that the screenplay of his book about Saddam Hussain was due to go into production and described plans for a science fiction novel. But he is most famous for his full-page Hindi and Urdu editorials on the second page of *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara*: the right hand columns in Urdu, the left in Hindi, the contents and language of the two varying slightly (i.e. the Nastaliq original is not transliterated straight into Devanagari). These editorials would be dictated to a sub-editor sitting in an adjoining office, and, when he was travelling, delivered via telephone. This woman would record his words in Urdu and then translate them into Hindi. The free-form structure and personal voice of these texts means that they convey a strong sense of the spoken word. These speeches/texts have attracted attention beyond the domain of Urdu newspapers as a result of being collected and published in book

[37] Interview with Aziz Burney, Noida, 4 September 2014.

form. Even when published in the newspaper they carried a certain weight because of their prominent position within the paper, and their grand title of “Azad Bharat ka Itihas” (“The History of Free India”).

Burney’s writings not only span borders between genres, formats, languages, the written and the spoken word, but also between the sayable and the unsayable. Most controversially, in a series of articles he wrote implicating the Hindu nationalist paramilitary organisation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, which resulted in a public apology on the front pages of both Hindi and Urdu Sahara. On 26 November 2008 gunmen attacked various landmarks in Mumbai, including Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus and the Taj Mahal Hotel. One hundred and seventy four people were killed over the course of three days. The attacks were at least partly planned from Pakistan, and badly affected relations between the two countries.

Aziz Burney wrote a series of editorials on these attacks, which were collected and put together in book form, and published conjointly in Hindi and Urdu in December 2010. The book attracted media attention because of the presence of Congress politician Digvijaya Singh at its New Delhi (6 December 2010) and Mumbai (27 December 2010) launch events. During both events Singh claimed that Hemant Karkare, head of the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad, had rung him a few hours before his death in the Mumbai attacks to say he feared for his life because of threats from Hindu extremists. (Karkare had been heading an investigation into the 2008 Malegaon bomb blasts, in which Hindutva organisations had been implicated.)

The book launch precipitated a legal case, and an apology published in both the Hindi and Urdu editions of Sahara. In the left-hand corner of the first page of the 28 January 2010 edition of *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* can be seen a short text in Hindi titled: “Aziz Burney ki taraf se saphai aur maphi: RSS ki Sajish 26/11 pustak ke sandarbh main” (“A clarification and apology from Aziz Burney with regards to his book *RSS Conspiracy, 26/11*”).

The fact that the apology was written in Hindi accentuates the impression of accommodation. "The story behind Aziz Burney's unconditional apology to the RSS in Hindi" is the headline of a story on the website *New Age Islam*.[38] The apology is not just written in Hindi script but, in parts, in a heavily Sanskritised Hindi, which is quite different from the language of Burney's Devanagari editorials. This is especially evident in its closing lines: "hridya se ksama chahta hun" ("I seek forgiveness from my heart"). It was removed from the e-edition of *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara*, although it did appear in the Hindi online edition. When I asked staff in the Noida office about this they said the decision had come from above, but it was arguably equally a response to feared and actual responses from below, and both its inclusion and removal were facilitated by technology, the speed with which it is now possible to produce multilingual layouts and edit e-editions.

This equivocal text is not quite the "unconditional apology" it was said to be. It starts in typically disorientating fashion by describing an editorial he wrote on 17 December 2010 titled "Hafiz Saeed hamara aparadhi hai: usse hamare hawale karo" ("Hafiz Saeed is our criminal: hand him over to us"). Saeed was the founder of Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba, and head of Jamat-ud-Dawa, which was seen by the Indian government as responsible for the attacks. So he begins his apology on the front foot by asserting his patriotism. He also avoids apologising to the RSS directly, instead addressing his apology more generally to any patriotic people who might have been hurt or offended by his writings. Burney writes that he does not connect the RSS to 26/11, and goes on to say that he is willing to change the title of his book *RSS ki Sazish 26/11?* (2010) if it has created this impression. This is an extraordinary statement as the book clearly does connect the RSS to the attacks. On the title piece of the Urdu edition of the book "RSS ki Sazish" in red and "26/11" in black are superimposed onto and almost obscure a white question mark. Below is

[38] "The story behind Aziz Burney's unconditional apology to the RSS", *New Age Islam*, 12 February 2011: http://www.newageislam.com/islam-and-the-media/the-story-behind-aziz-burney%E2%80%99s-unconditional-apology-to-the-rss/d/4113 (accessed 31/08/2015).

a photograph of the Taj Mahal hotel set ablaze, and the whole is framed by a black border. An RSS blog post concerning "the Islamic marauder Aziz Burney" declares that the "cover page itself and the title bring out the venomous diatribe that this Islamic traitor is launching against India".[39] There are echoes here of Azad's controversial combinations of image and text in his coverage of the Balkan and First World Wars, provoking the same charges of sedition and denunciations from 'loyal' Indians.

The 13 February 2011 edition of the RSS English language publication, *The Organiser* claims that Burney wrote his apology because of a lawsuit filed on 7 August 2009 by Vinay Joshi, a social worker with RSS connections (Kumar 2011). However, given the delay in publishing the 'apology' and the fact that the book compilation of his articles was published in the meantime, it seems unlikely that this was the only reason. Other reports speculated that Burney was made to publish it on the front page of both Hindi and Urdu Sahara, in an apparent attempt to appease his Hindu patron, Sahara Group chairman Subrato Roy, who was keen to maintain working relations with all political parties, and to avoid antagonising a powerful organisation such as the RSS. Quite a different kind of 'reaching out' to Hindu nationalists was going on here from that which characterised the Khilafat period; under direct external compulsion – pressure from a proprietor – and through means of a different language and technology.

Burney's position in Sahara continued to be precarious, and this forms the context of a series of editorials he wrote in response to the controversial 2010 Allahabad High Court judgement on the Ayodhya land title case. Disputes over who owns this plot of land, reputedly the site of a temple marking the birth of the Hindu deity Ram, came to a violent culmination in the 1992 destruction of the Babri Masjid, built upon the spot in 1528. In its 2010 judgement the High court declared that Ayodhya is the birthplace of the Hindu deity Ram and that this was proven by a report of the Archaeological Survey of India. The land was

[39] "Islamic terror spouting journalist called Aziz Burney", *Ennapadam Panchajanya*, 3 February 2011: http://ennapadampanchajanya.blogspot.co.uk/2011/02/islamic-terror-spouting-journalist.html (accessed 31/08/2015)

divided three ways between two Hindu organisations, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Nirmohi Akhara, and the Sunni Waqf board. As an infant, Ram's claims could be represented by the Hindu Mahasabha, and as a deity any claims made on his behalf were not time-barred, unlike those of the Sunni Waqf board, which were dismissed on this basis even though they were allocated a third of the land. The judgement was met with both shock and relief, as anticipated communal clashes did not occur. But there were soon criticisms of it as a faith-based judgement, and calls to take it to the Supreme Court and have it overturned. On 9 May 2011 the Supreme Court stayed the judgement on appeal, describing it as "something strange", given that no one had requested division of the land.[40]

Aziz Burney had been in the habit of writing emotive editorials on the anniversary of the destruction of the mosque, and it might have been expected that he would respond in kind to the 2010 judgment, but this was not the case. After keeping his counsel for a few days, he responded with an editorial on the 2 October 2010, titled "Kya zaruri hai, suprim kort jana…zara ghor karen" ("What need is there to go to the Supreme Court…please reflect on this"). In this editorial Burney acknowledges that 30 September 2010 was a difficult day for the Indian people and the Indian state, and expresses gratitude that there have been no untoward incidents. He respectfully asks the Muslim leaders and members of the ulama who are wanting to appeal the judgement, whether, given that it is the state's responsibility to maintain peace and unity, it is possible for a mosque to be built on this site. He offers an alternative scenario in which Muslims would ask their Hindu brethren to build a splendid Ram temple, whilst they themselves would build a mosque on the land allotted to them by the court. These two buildings would then become internationally renowned symbols of Indian traditions of communal harmony for coming generations.

[40] "Supreme Court stays Allahabad High Court verdict on Ayodhya", *The Hindu*, 9 May 2011: http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/supreme-court-stays-allahabad-high-court-verdict-on-ayodhya/article2003448.ece (accessed 01/09/2015)

The national perspective and 'statesmanlike' like tone he adopts in this text recall Sir Sayyid's attempts to present himself as a loyal representative of disaffected Indian Muslims in his work on the 1857 revolution, written in Urdu and published in London for an exclusive audience of British readers. They differ from Azad's editorials on the Kanpur mosque incident, not just in their 'moderation' (harking back to a reformist rather than revolutionary style of Indian Muslim politics) but also in their relatively narrow frame of reference. Here the international merely figures as an imagined audience for the resolution of a local conflict (north Indian, but cast as national), rather than as a site of strong comparisons and connections.

Over the following days (4, 8-15 October 2010) there followed more editorials on this theme. In these writings he presents himself in the role of a mediator between the concerns of the Muslim community and the needs of the Indian state, but with one eye on the proprietor of his newspaper, Subrato Roy, and another on the political parties. In particular, the Congress party, which was in power at the Centre at the time and preparing to contest the 2012 assembly elections in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Many Indian Muslims consider the Indian Congress party to have played a dishonourable role in this dispute. From the placement of Hindu idols inside the masjid in 1949, the unlocking of its gates in 1986, to its destruction in 1992 and the 2010 High Court Judgement, its most notorious episodes have occurred when the Congress party was in power at the centre. Despite its proclaimed secular identity, this correlation has encouraged speculation about a 'soft Hindutva' strain in Congress politics, which has been a factor in Muslim electoral disaffection from the party. Hence the periodic searches for 'spokesmen' figures, such as Burney, who could mediate between Muslim voters and Congress.

Because Aziz Burney's editorials are written in both Hindi and Urdu, they would have been easily accessible, and in the 22 June 2011 interview he mentioned that he was aware that they were being read by Congress politicians. During our first meeting in 2010 he had

shown me a letter from Sonia Gandhi thanking him for his support in the 2009 national elections, but in a subsequent interview he insisted that he had backed Congress because of its secular ideology and that he had no particular attachment to the party.[41] He would support the BJP if they were to become secular, he declared. It was true that he worked as an advisor for the central government's Human Resources Department, assisting the National Council for the Promotion of Urdu Language, but he emphasised that this was an honorary position. He had not taken any money from the Congress government. Nevertheless, rumours were circulating that the Congress was planning to re-launch its Urdu newspaper, *Qaumi Awaz*, from Lucknow in order to reach Muslim voters in time for the polls, and that Burney was slated to be its editor. Rumours were also circulating that he had ambitions for a Rajya Sabha seat on a Congress party ticket (seat in the upper assembly).

His efforts, if that is what they were, appear to have been unsuccessful. *Qaumi Awaz* did not resume publication, no Rajya Sabha seat was in the offing, and in November 2011 Burney was transferred to the corporate relations department at Sahara and his editorials ceased to appear. This was an important post, he assured me, with many responsibilities, but not in his line.[42] He never actually worked there, although for about a year and a half he got a regular salary, "a car, driver, servants, everything". He started his newspaper soon after he left Sahara, but said that he still maintained a close relationship with Roy, despite his current difficulties. Roy had been imprisoned in February 2014 on a Supreme Court warrant for failing to refund the 240 billion rupees he owed to investors. This relationship between the two men would last forever, Burney proclaimed. At first there was a relationship between an employer and an employee, now there was a love which was not limited to the period that he remained on the Sahara payroll. However, he had not visited Roy in jail because he was worried about what people would make of this.

[41] Interview with Aziz Burney, Noida, 22 June 2011.
[42] Interview with Aziz Burney, Noida, 4 September 2014.

Soon after leaving Sahara, with the publication of *Azizul Hind*, Burney realised his ambition of becoming a "one man media house".[43] When I spoke to him following the launch of his own paper he expressed excitement at the possibilities offered by new technology. Newspapers used to reach a limited circle, but now social networking and websites had considerably broadened their reach and brought him closer to his readers. Previously he used to tour the country from Kanyakumari to Darjeeling in order to address hundreds of thousands of people, and now this is no longer necessary. Nowadays even a journalist shut up in a room is capable of being discussed in every State in the land, of having the state concerned about what he will publish in the morning. He writes his editorial at 10pm and two hours later it reaches 130 countries, people run it through translation software and read it in various languages. What need for him to go anywhere?

By means of the latest communications technology, Burney evokes 'ancient' forms of inscription, a writing "without Paper, without Pen" (Mignolo 1998: 76), which does much more than attempt to 'represent' speech. Through his online editorials he aims to recover both the authority and immediacy of the spoken word and avail of the insurrectionary possibilities of writing. He even attempts to expiate what Pollock has described as "the guilt of Babel" (2006: 504), to reach readers in distant lands speaking other tongues through the medium of this 'ur-language'. Again, comparison could be made with Azad's ambitions in *al-Hilal*, the prophetic pretentions of his Urdu and especially Arabic editorials, in which being read seems to be less of a concern than transmitting a message and literally creating an audience.

But as well as being excited by the possibilities of electronic media, Burney seems to have been caught up short by buying into what Rancière describes as the "*onto-technological trick*" (2010a: 78). Namely, the over optimistic prognosis of an actually existing 'communism' created by de-territorialised and de-materialised forms of capitalist

[43] An ambition expressed in the interview he did on 14 July 2011 and repeated in the interview of 4 September 2014.

production, based in communication networks rather than goods for private appropriation. These are said to render the nation form redundant, allowing the 'multitude' to take its place as "the supreme manifestation of the History of Being" (ibid: 78). As well as being based in a misplaced faith in "the supreme manifestation of the History of Being", they are said to falsely equate dematerialization and de-commodification:

> So long as we do not actually turn into immaterial beings, we will continue to consume food, buy clothes and use computers, that is, objects which implement the collective intelligence of capitalism much more than they do the form of immaterial communication - and implement it in the form of underpaid factory work, underpaid work at home, clandestine workshops of 'illegal' immigrants and so on.
> (ibid: 78-79)

To return to the case in hand, as well as possibly over-estimating the computer literacy and technological resources of most Urdu readers (Amanullah 2009: 270), Urdu E-papers seem to be based on an unsustainable business model. *Azizul Hind* makes much of its internet presence whilst not revealing sales and circulation figures. The banner on the front page of its 1 May 2015 edition boasts that it reaches 150 countries and 1809 cities, and gives an estimated readership of 3,705,616 on the dubious basis of 'hits' received by its website. According to Burney's son, Subrat Aziz Burney, who is executive editor of *Azizul Hind*, internet readership was more important for the newspaper than paper readership, although the paper edition is published in Delhi, the neighbouring National Capital Region, and the states of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.[44] I came across it in several parts of UP during my fieldwork in 2013-14, including, surprisingly, Muzaffarnagar, where Hindi papers predominate, and noted that it was unusually expensive for an Urdu newspaper (Rs 5 at a time when *Rashtriya Roznama Sahara* sold for Rs 3).

According to Subrat Burney, this was because of the value and interest of his father's editorials, which continued to be published under the title, "Azad Bharat ka Itihas" and numbered in a sequence starting from their first appearance in *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara*. He said the paper was in receipt of both central and local state advertising, but the editions I

[44] Interview with Subrat Aziz Burney, Noida, 4 September 2014.

saw only contained small-scale private adverts for Unani medicines and such like, and larger more prominent ones for the Samajwadi Party. (The paper had started publication the year prior to the 2014 Indian elections, and was taking a very strong pro-Samajwadi party line.) Direct appeals for reader donations, with Burney's bank account details listed, seemed to reflect its poor financial condition. Subrat Burney insisted that the paper was doing quite well in UP compared to the two other main Urdu papers, *Sahara* and *Inquilab*, and that although the paper was not getting much advertising revenue "we are not in a high loss". *Azizul Hind* was in the initial stages of its production, and not yet a profit-making concern: "it's basically not a profit business in the beginning, but you get to know some people, you can meet politicians". The paper was produced by a staff of 50, most of whom were based in Aziz Burney's residence-cum-office, and printed from a press hired from the *Indian Express*. When I asked whether it was difficult to publish an Urdu newspaper from an English language press, Subrat Burney insisted that it was a "simple thing"; pages were sent to the press from the main office via the internet and then printed off. Uploading the paper onto the website was even simpler and cheaper.

Like Azad, Aziz Burney displayed an unconcern for sales and profit margins, but this attitude was harder for him to sustain because of the different exigencies he faced, despite the relative ease of Urdu newspaper production and absence of strict censorship laws. On 1 May 2015, a front-page editorial appeared justifying a doubling of *Azizul Hind's* cover price to Rs 10. Like Azad, Burney addresses the reader directly to justify this decision, and in similar terms. *Azizul Hind* is a movement and not just a newspaper, he explains. But it cost Rs 10 to produce the paper, and he breaks down its production costs: Rs 3.6 for paper, Rs 2.32 for printing, Rs 3.18 (Rs 18.3 is given but I am assuming this is an error) for editorial costs and about Rs 1 for distribution; only through advertising revenue and the cooperation of those who keep the pain of the "qaum" in their hearts is the paper able to make up this deficit. He emphasises his principled line with regards to accepting advertisements from

substandard or communal elements, and expresses regret that in the two years the paper has been in publication no worthy personages belonging to the community have spoken of cooperating with the newspaper, even though it is the wealth of the "qaum", which we know has need of its own media during this time when communalists have purchased Urdu media at a high price in an effort to reach Urdu knowing people. This is a reference to *Inquilab*, which had been purchased by the Dainik Jagran press group, an organisation that has strong Hindu nationalist associations – its former managing director, Narendra Mohan, was a BJP Rajya Sabha member. (In a 10 October 2013 editorial Burney explains his intention to produce both Hindi and Urdu editions of *Azizul Hind* in order to save Hindi reading Muslims from the necessity of reading communal papers such as *Dainik Jagran*.)

Burney says he started the paper in order to represent the community and its interests at the national and international level. Now he is faced with the choice of either shutting *Azizul Hind* or increasing its price, or, alternatively, switching to a weekly format, on the lines of the Urdu weekly *Nai Duniya*, or Hindi and English *Outlook* magazines. He asks readers to continue to buy the paper at the increased price, so that the movement can remain alive. This decision was not taken lightly. He knows that there are cheaper papers available on the market. Yet when one looks at the larger purpose this cost becomes meaningless. If it were our aim to get other kinds of benefit from producing a newspaper, then perhaps it would be possible to sell the paper for Rs 1. But this would not be true to the requirements of the community and of journalism. He ends by asking readers to advise him on whether they would prefer the paper to be produced weekly or bi-weekly, and lists his phone number and email address. The paper appears to have subsequently ceased publication; no further editions have been uploaded onto its website.

Both Azad and Burney had ambitions to be 'one man media houses', involving themselves in all aspects of newspaper production and directly addressing the reader, transgressing various boundaries as they did so, and facing constraints upon these ambitions.

Both men also played with the range of languages available to them in their editorials, and were 'early adopters' of new communications technology: type printing, halftone photography and telecommunications. But Burney seems to be stuck within narrower parameters, despite the greater speed and ease of new communications technology. Although both may have addressed themselves to Muslims in India, the expansiveness of Azad during the *al-Hilal* period is missing from Burney's work. This is partly a result of more severe financial constraints than those experienced by Azad, who had chosen to publish a weekly magazine rather than a daily newspaper and was financially independent. But it is also, arguably, an indication of the relatively limited possibilities available to Burney as he works within the confines of established forms of state nationalism and identity politics, and of 'vote bank' politics in particular. These would seem to preclude another kind of impossible speech suggested by art historian Rosalind Krauss's description of surreality as "nature convulsed into a kind of writing" (1985: 113); a use and an exceeding of sociotechnical constraints through a writing that would approximate unmediated thought, and a photography that would have the quality of writing (through automatic writing and deliberate captioning and arrangement of images); an 'impossible speech' that would allow for the re-imagining rather than fixing of 'given' identities.

Chapter three: Emergency pedagogy

This chapter picks up on the preceding chapter's discussion of state censorship during a 'special' period (war time and a time of 'terror'), and the thesis's overall concern with the discursive construction of 'the people', by looking at another major instance of pan-national and cross-denominational populist mobilisation in India: resistance to the internal emergency of 1975-77. The emergency occurred during a particularly febrile period in South Asian history, a decade that commenced with a war (Bangladesh War of 1971) and was characterised by authoritarian regimes, mass movements, coups and assassinations. One way to reconcile the combination of authoritarianism and greater participation in the political process, social movements centred on charismatic individuals that characterized this era, is a particular type of populism encouraged by the intersection of mass media and ideas of democratic representation. This is how David Page and William Crawley, for example, understand it when they describe the heyday of populism in South Asia as coinciding with a boom in radio ownership, which enabled political leaders to integrate new classes into politics by allowing them to speak to them directly (2001: 52); or Ayesha Jalal, who locates populism in "the interplay between democratic politics and authoritarian states" (1995: 3), part of a balancing act between the need for a new social covenant to maintain the legitimacy of the state and old alliances with dominant groups (ibid: 89). The contradictory requirement for change and stasis, "of evolution in the name of revolution, of running furiously in the same spot", is said to have given the "populist era" in South Asia its "duplicitous character" (ibid).

By dealing with an event in Bangladesh, the assassination of President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1920-1975), through its reception in neighbouring India, and the historic and geopolitical connections between the two countries, I work toward a different understanding of the movement of power and information within and across national boundaries. Towards this end I engage with Stuart Hall's writings on the encoding and

decoding of messages in broadcast media (1972, 1973 and 1980), which privileges the discursive form in communicative exchange over its production process. I am drawn to his work because his description of the way in which "a 'raw' historical event" assumes a "message form" that enables it to pass from source to receiver through formal rules by which language signifies (1980: 129) offers useful directions for how a particular event might be used to understand a broader process, whilst retaining awareness of both the moment of articulation and the communication network as a whole. But I temper it with a stronger understanding of audience reception derived from literary theory.

In describing the encoding/decoding process, Hall dismisses the ideal of perfectly transparent, unilateral communication as something that "can only exist in the (extremely rare) limiting case of the perfectly censored medium" (1973: 13). But he is also critical of the "residual pluralism", which underlies the concept of "selective perception":

> Of course, there will always be private, individual, variant readings. But 'selective perception' is almost never as selective, random or privatized as the concept suggests. The patterns exhibit, across individual variants, significant clusterings.
> (1980: 135)

The process of "encoding" is said to construct the limits within which "decodings" operate, and he enumerates three hypothetical positions for decodings of televisual discourse: the dominant-hegemonic position; a negotiated version, which mixes adaptive and oppositional elements; and an oppositional code in which a viewer understands both the literal and connotative inflection of a discourse, but decodes it in a contrary way (ibid: 137-138). A politically significant moment is said to be reached when events start to be subjected to oppositional reading, but this, too, exists within the parameters established by encoding: "If there were no limits, audiences could simply read whatever they liked into any message" (ibid: 135). Despite his scepticism about transparency, these parameters therefore closely resemble the mathematical theory of communication systems developed by Claude Shannon at Bell Telephone Laboratories, in which messages move from source to *intended*

destination through a channel that is "merely the medium used to transmit the signal from transmitter to receiver" (1998: 33-34).

In his essay "External influences on broadcasting", Hall specifies these limits as being defined by the state:

> The broadcasting institutions exercise a wide measure of editorial autonomy in their programmes: but ultimately they operate within the mode of reality of the state, and their programme content is, in the last instance, governed by the dominant ideological perspective and is oriented within its hegemony.
> (1972: 1)

As Hobart points out, in its reference to the structured totality of the discursive formation, Hall's account of articulation amounts to "a social or political act of linking cultural elements and social forces into hierarchical structures" (1999: 21), with, it would seem, the state at its pinnacle. This is quite different from Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of hegemonic articulation as made possible by the necessarily *incomplete* nature of the social (2014: 108).

Proceeding from Althusserian notions of the state apparatus and ideology, Bourdieu does something very similar through his deployment of the rubric of 'symbols'. Likewise, Hall's determinism seems to result from his use of the heuristic of 'codes', which Bakhtin famously described as "a deliberately established, killed context" (1986: 147). Whereas a context is "potentially unfinalised", a code, according to Bakhtin, is "a technical means of transmitting information", without any "cognitive, creative significance" (ibid). On this basis, Bakhtin distinguishes between semiotics, which deals with "the transmission of ready-made communication using a ready-made code", and "live speech", communication "created in the process of transmission" without any "code" (ibid). To the "code" he opposes the "word", described as living on "the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context" (2006: 284). Context is said to enter the speech that frames it in a "chemical union" rather than a "mathematical bond" (ibid: 340). It therefore cannot be studied in isolation from its "contextualized (dialogizing) framing" (ibid). With its dialogic capacities, the living

word also stands opposed to authoritative discourse, which is said to be inert, finite, and permitting of no free stylistic development in relation to it (ibid: 344).

I find this understanding of the "living word" useful for thinking about media practices during the Indian internal emergency of 1975-77, but that of "authoritative discourse" less so. My own working concepts of the dispositif of state and the insurrectionary possibilities of writing are informed by a different understanding of state power and political communication. More specifically, the monolithic operations of power Bakhtin describes do not speak to emergency-era repression, which, as Shiv Vishvanathan puts it, both "leaked like a sieve" and was of such a smallness and pettiness that it pervaded social relations and individual consciousness (1998: 45). It now seems preposterous to Sethi and Vishvanathan that the Defence Minister attempted to get his milkman an alcohol licence, or that the Information Minister locked up the staff of All India Radio and forced them to translate a Congress party document. "One is almost relieved at the petty-mindedness of those who hijacked the Indian state", they conclude (1998: 10). These insights have been elaborated in work on the everyday state in India (Fuller and Bénéï 2000; Gupta 1995 and 2012; Poole and Das 2004), including with specific reference to the emergency itself (Tarlo 2003). This chapter hopes to contribute to this literature by looking at how gaps in the reach and purview of state repression help to make the state legible, and, in provoking opposition to its actions, to coalesce social and political groups.

I have therefore been drawn to Wolfgang Iser's reader response theory, in which he also sets himself against transmitter-receiver models of reading that presuppose "a common code", and argues that in literary works "the message is transmitted in two ways" (1980: 107). The reader ""receives" it by composing it" along lines suggested by pre-programmed gaps in the text (1980: 107). Iser's understanding of the interaction between a literary text and its readers partly derives from R.D. Laing's dyadic model of interpersonal relationships, according to which people are unable to see themselves as others see them but act in light

of real or supposed views that others have of them all the same; but with the major difference that, in reading, there is "no face-to-face situation" (ibid: 109). A text cannot adapt itself to a reader, and a reader can never learn how accurate his interpretation of it is. Communication is said to be made possible and directed through this distance between text and reader:

> Communication in literature, then, is a process set in motion and regulated, not by a given code, but by a mutually restrictive and magnifying interaction between the explicit and the implicit, between revelation and concealment. What is concealed spurs the reader into action, but this action is also controlled by what is revealed; the explicit in its turn is transformed when the implicit has been brought to light. Whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins.
> (ibid: 111)

Although Iser emphasis the creative participation of the reader and textual indeterminacy, he persists in speaking of a "successful" reading of a text (ibid: 110). Even when applied to fiction that works within genre conventions, this phenomenological approach to literature as a "sense-making activity" provokes questions about the possibility of "idiosyncratic" realizations of a text and the status of the reading subject (Suleiman 1980: 23). Susan Suleiman observes that the reader that emerges from his theory is not a "historically situated individual" but a "transhistorical mind" whose activities are the same everywhere (ibid: 25).

I take on board such criticisms, and Suleiman's suggestion that we "focus on the actual reading experiences and responses of specific individuals to specific works" (ibid: 27). But I still find something valuable in Iser's description of the "virtual character" of any literary work, situated between but irreducible to the "reality of the text" and the "subjectivity of the reader", and from this deriving its dynamism:

> As the reader passes through the various perspectives offered by the text, and relates the different views and patterns to one another, he sets the work in motion, and so sets himself in motion, too.
> (1980: 106)

This seems like a more promising way to understand what goes on in the 'reading' of a text/message than the sender-message-receiver model, because of the greater attention it

pays to audience response, which, as has often been observed (Nightingale 1996: 31), is under-theorised in this model. Applied to the realm of political communication, it could even be used to describe a virtual space in which 'the people' might momentarily come into being.

In thinking about the last point, I have been inspired by Robert Darnton's reworking of reader-reception theory to understand state censorship. From the perspective of a comparative study of censorship in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and pre-revolutionary France, Darnton comes to the conclusion that reading "is a mystery everywhere" (Darnton 1995: 55); at one and the same time an individual activity and a social one, spanning agency and structure, making reader response hard to predict and a dichotomous understanding of the relationship between censorship and free speech hard to sustain. Darnton tells the story of how "the Enlightenment penetrated cracks in the system and spread through French society" (ibid: 45), cracks that had been created by the legal system itself through a series of categories that allowed books to appear on the market without official permission. Superficially these "obscure, gray areas where orthodoxy shades off into heresy" seem to have been in the realm of James Scott's "shadow state" (Scott 1998), but this was not simply a case of a discrepancy between state policy and actual practice, or of real knowledge and meanings being concealed – the "hidden transcript" (Scott 1990). Rather, an account of "hidden complicities" (Darnton 1995: 55) between readers and writers, *and* between writers and censors. Complicities running in all directions, the push-pull of multiple agencies and constraints produced new practices and knowledge.

In the GDR, it is said to have encouraged new types of writing (official propaganda, subversive literature), which in turn encouraged new ways of reading. When confronted with censored literature readers became attuned to tone and typographical features, scanning up and down texts in search of irregularities. When dealing with official messages they read "critically, aggressively, with a combination of sophistication and alienation unimaginable in the West, even among our hardiest deconstructors" (ibid: 57-58). In both

instances “East Germans not only read between the lines; they also controlled the meanings in the blank spaces” (ibid).

It may be debatable whether all East Germans responded to censored media with this level of sophistication. Nevertheless, Darnton offers useful directions for going beyond a dichotomous understanding of ‘passive’ or ‘active’ audience reception. He emphasises that meanings were *made* through these interfaces rather than simply hidden and found. Groups and subjects articulated in this way were hard to fix, a difficulty that went beyond individual reader response or linguistic indeterminacy – the necessarily incomplete task of subjectification. Censorship seems to have articulated subjectivity *and* sociality, although not in the way intended by the Censor. By linking individual readers and writers through illicit circulation of books and particular modes of reading and writing it produced a sense of community that was provoked by but outside the direct control of state regulation.

I will therefore adapt and adopt both transmitter-receiver and reader-response communication models to look at reception of an event occurring in one context through its reception in another, with special focus on the role played in its dissemination by yet another, hoping to remain attentive to the media in which it was transmitted all the while. Specifically, through its reception in the prison writings of two political leaders arrested in connection with the emergency in India, who mostly learnt of Mujib’s assassination through foreign print and broadcast media - Jayaprakash Narayan (1902-1979), leader of the anti-Congress movement for Total Revolution, and L.K. Advani (1927-), Jana Sangh and later Bharatiya Janata Party politician. I have chosen to look at Advani’s *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book* (1978) and Narayan’s *Prison Diary* (1977b) because these books were written and published in the 1970s and presented as a response to events as they unfold: Advani and Narayan describe day-by-day transformations in their understanding of what happened as they learn about it from a range of sources. This means that they are relatively free of retrospective justification for actions at the time in light of subsequent events that are a feature of later

publications. For example, books by Narayan's doctor (Chhuttani 1995) and jailor (Devashayam 2006), and even B.N. Tandon's *PMO Diary* (2003), which claims to be a diary kept during this period by a member of the Prime Minister's secretariat but was published later.

Their accounts are also valuable precisely because they were produced in a particular context for a purpose - in emergency-era prisons as underground literature, and therefore offer insights into the workings of repression and censorship *and* the underground press. Additionally, they were written by articulate, well-informed and well-connected figures who between them span the entire period of post-Independence politics. Narayan had been active in the Independence movement, Advani was to become a prominent BJP politician, and both men had privileged access to information because of their social status and political connections.

I will begin with a brief overview of the geopolitical dynamics within which the event took place, then consider conditions of reception for this event in India generally, and for the prison writers Advani and Narayan in particular, with special focus on the ideological underpinnings and effects of differential treatment of print and broadcast media. I will go on to analyse the way their books deal with this event and conclude with tentative outlines for an alternative understanding of the dissemination of power and information, that is, 'emergency pedagogy'. I use this term not in its usual sense, as a description of trauma relief, but to describe a process of knowledge transmitted will-to-will rather than brain-to-brain, through spatiotemporal disordering rather than the progressive, unilinear model of state development programmes and censorship. I will conclude by looking at Congress's defeat in the 1977 election as 'reader response' to emergency-era censorship and repression.

Chaos in the air

Democracy, by organising human community without reference to any entitlement to govern, may signify "a rupture with the order of kinship…a structural heterotopy between the principle of government and the principle of society" (Rancière 2006b: 45). But states, as Forsyth observes in his study of confederation, are "inherently 'social' beings…they define themselves in relation to one another" (1981: 10). This was keenly felt by new states, such as India and Pakistan, which emerged from anti-colonial struggle, and even more so by what might be called the 'new new' states that broke off from them, such as Bangladesh, which was initially something of a pariah state. Bangladesh only gained admittance to the United Nations in 1974; UN members, however sympathetic they might have been to East Pakistan, being reluctant to legitimise an act of secession given that many of them faced separatist movements within their own borders (Baxter 1997: 145-146).

Disquiet with the formation of Bangladesh also related to changing geopolitical dynamics. Briefly: a further twist to US-Soviet antagonism was provided by deepening Sino-Soviet rivalry, which led China to seek rapprochement with the United States, leading the latter to tilt towards Pakistan, and encouraging closer relations between India and the Soviet Union in turn. These realignments were given concrete expression in the Indo-Soviet Peace Treaty of 1971 and US support for Pakistan during its war against India in the same year. This tangle of relations produced "dizzy eventualities" such as the possibility of "Chinese nuclear threats in defence of West Pakistan", leading to counter-threats from the Russians and the Americans, which are said to have pulled Delhi and Islamabad "back from the brink" (Jackson 1975: 160). The 1971 war was quickly concluded by a bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan, according to which India accepted the surrender of Pakistani forces in the East and offered a ceasefire in the West. Occurring soon after this conflict and involving one of its main protagonists, the assassination of Mujib was variously interpreted as a global, regional and domestic event. Rumours regarding the role of the US in the assassination, and anxiety

about global realignments that might result from it, were, as I will go on to discuss in more detail, significant features in its reception.

Global connections were also important in the dissemination of the event. Within Bangladesh, the majors who organised the coup were prompt to get their version out, taking over the national radio station on the morning that it occurred (Lifschultz and Bird 1979: 2001). Those responsible were protected by an Indemnity Ordinance passed in September 1975, which was only repealed after Sheikh Hasina Wajed, Mujib's eldest daughter, came to power in 1996.[45] News of Mujib's assassination was initially withheld in India, occurring as it did at the inopportune moment of Indian Independence day, when Indira Gandhi was due to make her first public address since the proclamation of emergency. Full details of the massacre (the killing of most members of Mujib's immediate family) were also censored.[46] But attempts to withhold news of it within India were rendered futile by unimpeded foreign radio broadcasts. Some of these international radio broadcasts were in regional languages and Urdu, and therefore capable of reaching mass audiences.

The important role played by international radio seems to have been strangely overlooked in accounts of the emergency. Even Weiner's (1978) valuable first-hand account of the 1977 election does not mention it, choosing to focus instead on more visible manifestations of dissent: large public meetings, graffiti and handbills. He argues that in a country with low literacy rates and a radio and television network that is controlled by the government and only reaches a fraction of the population, election campaigns mainly take the form of public meetings (ibid: 21). Page and Crawley, in their book on broadcasting in South Asia, describe the 1977 election result as occurring despite "censorship of the press

[45] Sheikh Hasina Wajed was one of two daughters spared during the family massacre because she was not in Bangladesh at the time. The instigators of the coup were only arrested in 1996, put to trial in 1997 and some of them executed in 2010 (see Amnesty International reports for 1997 and 2010).

[46] *The Pen in Revolt*, a compendium of literature produced during the emergency, compiled by the Press Council of India, reproduces the text of a letter sent by Indira Gandhi apologizing for censoring the publication of his obituary of Mujib (Anon 1978: 16). The writer, an elite civil service officer, had known Mujib personally, and written to the Chief Minister of West Bengal to protest. Gandhi writes in response that she was moved by the translation of his article and valued his analysis. Nevertheless, public reactions to an event in a neighbouring country must be modulated with the utmost care: "What a person of your position in the literary world says will have far-reaching impact, and I am sure that you would not like to cause us any embarrassment" (ibid: 16).

and the tightest possible regulation of All India Radio and Doordarshan", the two state-controlled broadcasters (2001: 53). Both analyses ignore the significance of international media and the way various formats intersect, particularly in a context of low literacy levels but high levels of literacy awareness and multilingualism.

There was a historical precedent to this in the role radio had played during the independence movement; directly as a propaganda tool via Congress radio and Indian National Army radio, which broadcast during the early 1940s, but also indirectly through foreign broadcasts. In the first listener research survey conducted by All India Radio (AIR) in 1940 it was discovered that Indians were listening to news from Germany that was hostile to Britain, and that the Hindustani news bulletin from Berlin was "widely listened to" and regarded as "more truthful" than the English version (Gupta 2001: 469). On another front there was the threat to empire posed by Radio Moscow. An Intelligence Bureau report from 16 March 1932 described how Indians were picking up its English language broadcasts on favourable conditions in the USSR, and expressed concern about what would happen were it to start broadcasting in other Indian languages (ibid: 460-461).

The political potential of radio was even greater following the arrival of "the transistor revolution" that occurred in the 1960s, when radios became ubiquitous even in remote and rural areas: "From five million licenses in 1965, the number rose to twenty million licences in 1977, the year Congress lost power for the first time after Mrs Gandhi's Emergency rule" (Page and Crawley 2001: 51-52). During this period radio was not just a medium of propaganda but also a weapon of war. In the early 1970s the Congress-led Indian government had lent support, through AIR, to the pro-Awami League *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra*, which aired from Calcutta during the 1971 war (ibid: 57). Bangladesh's independence was first declared via radio on 26 March 1971, and its new government initially operated from a station in Chittagong (Baxter 1997: 87).

The Indian government had attempted to control foreign radio by subjecting the work of its local correspondents to pre-censorship, and, when this did not work, by expelling foreign journalists. Mark Tully, who was the BBC correspondent for India at the time, described having to submit broadcasts for monitoring to the censors at All India Radio, who would interpret "virtually anything that was not effusive praise as criticism".[47] Following complaints about the erratic nature of this censorship, journalists were presented with a list of rules. When the BBC and other foreign broadcasters refused to comply with these, they were duly expelled. Despite these expulsions foreign radio stations continued to broadcast into India for the duration of the emergency, gathering news from local sources by telephone and telex, and Tully reports that listenership for the BBC service went up during this period when official media in India was heavily censored.

Getting foreign broadcasters stationed abroad to comply with Indian regulations and submit their material for censorship might not have been possible, but it would have been technically feasible to jam their broadcasts. During the colonial period this appears to have been attempted with Congress Radio in Bombay. An article by one of the broadcasters describes "the mischief played by the A.I.R (Anti India Radio)", which would jam their broadcasts.[48] However, limitations in the technology available prevented it becoming a general policy of the central government, with an engineer in the colonial administration warning that British communications being "strung out all over the world", they stood to lose more than they would gain by creating "chaos in the air" (Gupta 2001: 470).

Later, during the cold war period, the USSR adopted a policy of jamming foreign radio broadcasts, but it remained an ineffective technology despite the fact that the Soviets apparently spent the equivalent of billions of US dollars on it (Schmemann 1988). It was reportedly most effective in densely populated urban areas, and even there easily

[47] Interview with Mark Tully, New Delhi, 13 September 2014.
[48] "Congress Radio Calling", copy of an undated and unattributed article relating to the 1942 movement, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Miscellaneous Items, Accession No. 99

circumvented by listeners who would take their shortwave radio sets out of city limits to pick up broadcasts in areas where jamming was less intense. Hence it was particularly ill suited to a large country with a predominantly rural population and several international borders such as India. *The White Paper on misuse of media during the internal emergency* describes a meeting between ministers and broadcasters regarding coverage of events in India by foreign radio, which led to recommendations that the Director General of AIR should prepare a weekly bulletin of trends in reporting "in English and Indian languages", and discuss the technical implications and feasibility of jamming foreign broadcasts with the Defence Ministry (GI 1977: 11). From prisoners' accounts of listening to international radio during the emergency it would seem that there was no concerted attempt to jam signals. The imperative to censor seems to have been counterbalanced by the desire to disseminate a message and monitor how it was being received internationally.

One effect of this was to encourage a form of circulation in which print, radio and the word of mouth were imbricated; most strikingly, in the format of the underground news sheet: handwritten, typed or cyclostyled documents containing on-the-fly translations and transcriptions of foreign newspapers and radio broadcasts, distributed by hand or post, and bearing the slogan "Read, reproduce and circulate".[49] The logics and logistics at work in this underground form of circulation were made explicit in an alternative Independence Day address sent out on the same day that Mujib was murdered. In a public letter addressed to "comrades", located "somewhere underground" and dated 15 August 1975, the union leader George Fernandes lays out his instructions for the conduct of media satyagraha (Anon 1978: 13-14). These include appeals to boycott "All Indira Radio", as AIR came to be described during the emergency-period, and listen to "BBC, VOA, even the Pakistani and Peking Radio" instead; to duplicate, copy and translate underground news bulletins, and to encourage others to do these things (ibid: 14). The logic of circulation is concentrated in the

[49] Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, IIIrd Instalment, Subject file no. 315

formula “three raised to the power of eighteen”, whereby if three people tell a story to only three others “in eighteen operations the whole country will have heard the story” (ibid). He ends with the injunction: “Learn the power of the spoken word” (ibid).

In its dialogism, Fernandes’s “spoken word” would seem to closely resemble what Bakhtin designates as “the living word”, the smallest linguistic unit of his theory of heteroglossia, or “social diversity of speech types” (2006: 263). The living word is opposed to the “sacred” word, which “demands reverent repetition and not further development, corrections, and additions” (1986: 133). It is also distinct from the “authoritative” word, described as prior to discourse and resounding from “lofty spheres, not those of familiar contact” (2006: 342). More clearly than either of these, it participates in what Bakhtin describes as “the social life of discourse…discourse in the open spaces of public squares, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs” (ibid: 259).

But in the closed spaces of emergency-era India, the power of the spoken word seems to have been underlined by the attempt to silence it, and to have acquired greater potency through being dispersed, translated and mixed with other media; notably print and broadcast media, both of which are technically mediated rather than ‘social’ in the sense of involving face-to-face interaction. For this reason Bakhtin writes with ambivalence about the early impact of print and with hostility about technology. He describes the printing of chivalric romances as bringing about “social disorientation” by displacing its audience and shifting its discourse into “a *mute* mode of perception” (2006: 379). He dismisses the “entire methodological apparatus of the mathematical and natural sciences” in similar terms as “directed toward mastery over *mute objects*, *brute things*, that do not reveal themselves in words, that do not *comment on themselves*” (ibid: 351).

At these moments, Bakhtin expresses an ancient suspicion of writing, which can be traced back to Plato’s *Phaedrus*, where Socrates famously likens writing to painting, in its ‘muteness’ and inability to distinguish between whom it should or should not address (Plato

2005: 63). Rancière, in his reading of this text, emphasizes that Socrates does not simply criticise writing as inferior to speech, but for its "particular staging of the speech act" (2011b: 93-94: 94):

> Writing always traces much more than the signs it aligns; it also traces a particular relation of bodies to their souls and to other bodies, and of the community to its soul. It is a specific distribution of the sensible, a specific structuring of a common world. For Plato this structuring appears as the undoing of any regulation of the legitimate order by which the *logos* distributes itself and distributes the bodies of a community.
> (ibid)

Because the written word overturns the relation between a discourse and the person to whom it might legitimately belong, to whom it is addressed and the way it should be received, it "muddles the way in which knowledge and discourse order visibility and establish authority" (ibid). By extension, democracy is described as "the regime of writing", an anarchic regime in which the law is given by "the wanderings of the orphaned letter, in which it occupies the place of living discourse, the place of the community's living soul" (ibid: 95).

The dissonance between doing, being and saying induced by writing is said to inhere in the form of certain texts. Rancière pays particular attention to the "*topos* of the found book" or the "book in pieces" (ibid: 90), in which a narrative is retrieved from scattered sources. He gives the example of Jean Paul's *Life of Fibel*, which purports to be reconstructed from remnants found in a book store and scraps used to make "coffee filters, kites, dress patterns, pipe lighters, chair covers, and herring wrappers", retrieved and reassembled, page by page, by village urchins hired by the narrator (ibid: 87). Fibel's "novelistic fancy" is traced back to the myth of Gyges the shepherd, who finds a golden ring that renders him invisible and allows him "to seduce the queen of Lydia, kill the king, and take his place" (ibid: 89). This primordial fable is related to the entry into writing, and said to suggest its insurrectionary possibilities.

Derrida, in his reading of Plato's *Phaedrus*, argues that these possibilities are suggested by the text itself. Drawing particular attention to the section in which Socrates

compares the written text that Phaedrus carries with him to the "pharmakon", a "medicine and/or poison" that leads the reader away from his "general, natural, habitual paths and laws", Derrida observes that only words which are "deferred, reserved, enveloped, rolled up, words that force one to wait for them in the form and under cover of a solid object" can get Socrates moving (2000: 70-71).

There are clear resonances here with the format, distribution, contents and ambitions of the underground press during the Indian emergency. But these often seemed to be encouraged by, rather than existing in simple opposition to, the flat-footed operations of state censorship, which in a period of low literacy levels was disproportionately concerned with print media, and print media in English at that. (In the 1971 census an overall literacy rate of a mere 34.45% had been recorded.) Indira Gandhi even claimed that opposition to her rule came from the newspapers alone:

> While explaining the reasons for the imposition of Emergency, Smt. Gandhi had said that it was the newspapers which were inciting the people and creating a terrible situation. According to her, the agitation was only in the newspapers and once the newspapers were placed under censorship there was no agitation.
> (GI 1978, Vol I: 33)

According to this view it is readers who possess a critical intellect and are therefore capable of threatening state projects; whereas in a September 1975 address to Directors of AIR, V.C. Shukla, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, described radio as "the most potent medium that the Government has at its command" (GI 1977, Appendix 7: 15). This is qualitatively different from Nehru declaring that the *Independent*, the nationalist newspaper founded in 1919, would "'think aloud for India'" (Israel 1994: 1). In contrast to the way in which Indira Gandhi worries about the unruliness of print, broadcast media is viewed as an instrument over which the state is imagined to have control.

The Indian government famously offered transistor radios as an inducement for men to undergo sterilization during the emergency, and there is arguably a similar kind of logic to this. Both initiatives configured listeners as passive ('silent') recipients of state programmes

and messages. Underlying this attitude is the standard theory of communication, which privileges the spoken over the written word because of its immediacy, and a hierarchy that places speakers and writers over readers and listeners.

As discussed in the introduction, this has been countered by other conceptions of the contingent nature of the relationship between the written and spoken word. This view seems to correspond better to the communication processes at work during the emergency, which seemed to benefit from 'quirks' in implementation of state censorship compounded by the interface between the spoken and written word in a multilingual context. This is how George Fernades's alternative Independence Day message came to be widely disseminated through the written word, existing in a state of "radical contingency" (Gupta 2012: 197) with the spoken word in various languages. Moreover, in an age of broadcast media dissent did not have to remain local, reaction was rendered ineffective on a national scale by international radio working in conjunction with modern telecommunications and the simple cyclostyle technology of the local underground press. By these means it also elided Bakhtin's distinction between the "living word" and "technical means" by combining the properties of both.

Prison writers

Prisons were a state-level rather than Central subject, meaning that detention conditions varied from state to state, in accordance with classifications established in colonial era legislation on the categorisation and separation of prisoners. Specifically, the 1894 Prisons Act and colonial-era prison manuals, which divided prisoners on the basis of social and educational status and ethnicity. *The Maintenance of Internal Security (Conditions of Detention) (Mysore) Order, 1971* (MISA), under which L.K. Advani was detained in Bangalore, states that "security prisoners" will be divided into two classes, "Class 'A' and Class 'B' having

regard to the state of health, education, status and mode of living of such security prisoners prior to detention". The race bar may have been lifted (categories such as European and Indian which were a feature of colonial manuals), but the reference to education and social status remained – "habit of life" as it is expressed in the early jail manuals.[50] Plus there was the significance of unofficial status, which meant that even when Advani was briefly transferred to Rohtak jail in Haryana, where there was only one class of MISA prisoner, he continued to have company and access to media.

With figures such as Advani and Narayan who had been arrested under MISA, there was a further complication in that they were being held in preventive rather than punitive detention, and therefore "detenus" rather than convicts. Although this, too, was inconsistently applied with the Shah Commission observing in its state-wise survey of jail conditions that except for food, clothing and reading material, those detained under MISA were often lodged in the same conditions as other inmates (GI 1978, Vol. III: 135). Many of the "senior and respected leaders" arrested were also elderly and in need of specialist medical care (ibid), the terminally ill Narayan being the most famous example.

With Narayan and some of the other senior movement leaders there was the additional awkwardness that many of them had been heroes of the Independence movement. The last time they had been imprisoned was by the colonial state. The Shah Commission points to anomalies in the situation:

> At no time since Independence was such a large scale detention of senior and respected leaders ordered simultaneously all over the country and no notice whatever was given to the authorities concerned for being prepared to receive the large influx of respected leaders as detenus. A large number of those who were detained, were fairly advanced in age and many of them were in need of constant and specialised medical attention for which the jail hospitals were totally ill-equipped.
> (GI 1978, Vol. III: 135)

[50] In the "The Maintenance of Internal Security (Conditions of Detention) (Mysore) Order, 1971" this is expressed as "mode of living". Security prisoners are divided into class A and B on the basis of "health, education, status and mode of living" prior to detention. (National Archives of India, Home List No. 180; 1287 5. 41011/9/KNT/77-T-4 – "Replies received from Karnataka on Questionnaire reg. treatment in Jails.")

Unsurprisingly, both Advani and Narayan draw historical analogies with colonial repression in their prison writings, describing Indira Gandhi as even more tyrannical than the colonial state, which is said to have left some room for criticism. Narayan observes that it is only in independent India that he has experienced "tear gas, lathi blows" and solitary detention (1977: 6). Advani claims that nothing "the British did in 1936 in the matter of civil liberties can match the crimes against democracy by the present government" (1978: 77).

But in many ways Narayan and Advani appear to have received preferential treatment from the prison authorities. Fear of the repercussions of his dying in custody led to Narayan being shifted to hospitals in Delhi and Chandigarh and eventually released on 12 November 1975. Conditions seem to have been particularly favorable for Advani, arrested as part of a parliamentary delegation, kept in Class A conditions in the south Indian state of Karnataka for the most part, allowed regular family visits and able to send and receive letters and telegrams. In the *Scrapbook* he describes Bangalore jail, where he spent most of his time in prison, as having "the best jail library I have ever seen", containing English and Hindi books as well as a wide range of Kannada literature, and benefiting from being maintained as a sub-branch of the Central Library, Bangalore, rather than run as part of the jail administration (1978: 16). Unlike other categories of MISA detainees there were no restrictions on his use of the library (ibid: 18) and a transistor radio (ibid: 103). In Rohtak jail, where he stayed from 15 July – 23 September 1975, he continued to read newspapers and listen to the radio, and was also able to watch television. In Ahmedabad, where he was briefly transferred in March 1976, he was able to receive news reports and to convey information about his movements to family members and party workers through a co-detainee who maintained "a very active communication link with those outside" (ibid: 131). Both Advani and Narayan could send and receive letters, access national and international media, and had the opportunity to write about their response to them. Advani mentioned

not being able to use a typewriter when in prison, but experienced no other restrictions on writing materials.[51]

Narayan's *Prison Diary* covers the period from 21 July to 4 November 1975, and according to its editor, A.B. Shah, is presented with minimal editing (1977b: viii). The first edition had been printed in small installments at night, under conditions of censorship. A second edition, published in 1977 soon after Indira Gandhi's election defeat, added a few appendices to this text. It is written in English for the most part, but includes sections in Hindi when calling for total revolution (7 August 1975, pp.9-10 and 7 October, pp.87-88); celebrating Republic Day (15 Aug 1975, pp.15-16) and the 106th birthday of Gandhi (2 October 1975, p.82); and discussing the *Bhagavat Gita* and its commentaries (16 August 1975, p.17; 15 October, p.92). Hindi seems to be the medium chosen for expressions of political idealism, patriotism and religious faith – for addressing 'the people'. English is used for analysis and addressing the state: his analytical notes on the people's movement are in English, as are his open letters to Indira Gandhi.

Advani's book covers a longer period of imprisonment, includes entries for 26 June 1975 – 12 March 1976, is written in English and described as a "scrapbook" rather than a diary. Its first part, titled "A view from behind bars", resembles the diary format in that it is a chronological reflection on events as they unfold, but at various points Advani distinguishes between the text we are reading and the diary he kept during this period by referring to occasions when he wrote in the latter (1978: 15). Sections from this diary do appear in the book, but it is not a verbatim reproduction of it. The book has been compiled at a later date; content may have been added, removed and edited. Part two is a collection of five pamphlets written by Advani and distributed from jail by the Lok Sangharsh Samiti (the people's struggle committee), an underground resistance organisation headed by former RSS full-timer Nanaji Deshmukh (Basu 1993: 52). Part three consists of letters and notes sent

[51] Interview with L.K. Advani, New Delhi, 20 September 2014.

from jail. Part four includes three appendices: a synopsis of legal proceedings against Advani et al. and an enumeration of the likely course of events over the next six months, as seemed likely to Advani on 31 October 1975.

In his preface to *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book*, Moraji Desai, the then prime minister, describes its title as an example of "Shri Advani's modesty", and says he is sure it "will prove to be an important addition to the Library of our second liberation" (Advani 1978: vi). Prison literature had become a familiar genre by the mid-seventies, and both men would have been aware of colonial-era examples of it. Indeed, Narayan had earlier contributed to it with *Inside Lahore Fort* (1959). The significance of the moment both men are living through is underlined by parallels between the emergency and earlier periods in Indian history, and also international history and politics. As Advani notes, these analogies were a common feature of journalism during the emergency. Precluded from criticising the government directly, writers took to "historical narratives and references which have a moral for the present" (1978: 51). Prison writers who were not submitting their material for censorship in private writing, at least, were operating from different imperatives when drawing parallels and making comparisons. Through analogy and contrast they attempt to discern rather than conceal the outlines of their current experience, and also to assert its world-historical significance. As I will go on to elaborate in my reading of Narayan's text, in this way they also draw upon the "the virtual relevance of the past in refiguring the prevailing forces of the present" (Grosz 2004: 252).

The virtual and the past were both available to them because of the storage capacities of the media through which the messages they receive were transmitted. From his emergency-era writings it is clear that Advani in particular was attuned to changes wrought in the scope, reach and form of messages disseminated by new technology in a post-Independence political context, and able to place them both historically and internationally. Familiar with the ways of modern day politics and media, Advani draws

parallels between Indira Gandhi's actions and those of Richard Nixon. The new style of politics in India is said to be based on the same principles, with "political manipulation becoming the substitute of political policy, and invention of bogeys to mobilise mass support" (Advani 1978: 268).

In making the comparison with Nixon, Advani was also possibly thinking of his televised appeals for support for the Vietnam War from what he described as "the great silent majority of my fellow Americans". Underlying this invocation of a "great silent majority" is both what Rancière describes as "the 'liberal' opposition of the enlightened individual to the stupid mass" (2011a: 239), and also "the paradox of the spectator": there is no theatre without spectators, but spectatorship is a "bad thing" because viewing is the opposite of knowing and acting (2009: 2). The dangerous crowd and the audience are configured as close cousins in their imagined amenability to manipulation by leaders/spokesmen.

Advani, reflecting on Indira Gandhi's audacity in "lying" in her first formal address to the nation since the emergency, writes that "this outright lie…must have given to the thinking sections of our people a measure of the deceit and untruth which marked Indira Gandhi's campaign of calumny against the opposition" (1978: 38). As a journalist and politician, someone professionally qualified to decode state messages, he implicitly includes himself in this category. By writing about his response to media and distributing this writing through the underground press, he establishes 'voice', asserts a capacity to both know and act despite his consumption of censored media and confinement in a state jail.

Narayan's account also demonstrates awareness that he is writing a historically significant document, not just responding to the exigencies of the moment in producing documents for the underground press. Both men are transmitters and receivers of emergency-era messages. Rather than being a passive audience for news of a 'raw' event, they construct meanings from information they receive from a variety of media, which they interpret through their awareness of a host of Cold War and postcolonial contexts, and from

within a 'special' context. But I argue that whilst their position and location may have been 'special', far from being unique it was shared by many Indians both within and without the walls of emergency-era prisons. This is sweepingly expressed in the RSS history of this period, which declares that "Mrs Gandhi transformed the whole country into a huge jail by proclaiming the emergency" (1991: 89). Congress's defeat in the 1977 election has also been described as something of a 'jail break', in its apparent affirmation of liberal, democratic values (Rudolph and Rudolph 1978). The cases of these 'Prison Writers' are therefore presented with a view to understanding the wider dynamics of media production and reception during this period, which will culminate in a consideration of the 'Reader Voters' who participated in the 1977 election.

"Back to the barbaric feudal days"

Detention conditions for Narayan may have been relatively favourable, but he seems to have experienced them as being far from ideal, and to have particularly resented being kept in solitary confinement. Every day there is something in the papers that upsets him, he writes, usually Indira Gandhi's "half-truths and lies", and wishes that there was another political detenu with him with whom he could talk and vent his feelings; this would be worth "many tablets and sedatives and tranquillisers" (1977b: 14).

Being kept in solitary confinement seems to induce a particular kind of introspection in Narayan. The very first entry in his *Prison Diary*, dated July 21 1975, establishes the tone of self-recrimination and regret that pervades the book: "My world lies in a shambles all round me…I must bear the full, the whole, responsibility" (ibid: 1). Later he goes on to describe how "every nail driven deeper into the coffin of Indian democracy is like a nail driven into my heart" (ibid: 4), which is not an empty simile given the state of his health. His visceral response to politics oddly recalls a period when the emperor's physical person was

the locus of the state. From the controversy over purchase of his dialysis machine (Narayan 1977a: 97-98), through to postmortem examinations to determine whether he had been medically injured in jail by not being given appropriate treatment, his imprisonment during the emergency and death soon after were to become a part of "socio-political-medical history" (Chhuttani 1995: viii). Narayan himself draws these parallels in his empathetic response to the account of Aurangzeb's death in Ishwari Prasad's *History of Muslim Rule,* which he describes reading on the eve of Mujib's murder. In the entry for 14 August 1975, he draws parallel between his own situation and Prasad's account of Aurangzeb's lonely final days: "What the Emperor felt, a humble person like me could be allowed to feel" (1977b: 15).

But the example of Aurangzeb, under whose rule the Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent before falling apart, also encourages more impersonal reflection on antecedents to the emergency. He observes that there has never been a successful attempt to govern India from a single centre and heavily centralised states have not lasted long. The borders of various empires have expanded and shrunk with the passing of time and all of them have eventually disintegrated. This was case even when there was "no concept of democracy based on adult franchise, or of civil liberties and rights of every common citizen" (ibid: 16). Thinking about Indira Gandhi's action in stark historical perspective, without reference to specific rulers and periods, allows Narayan to abstract out the dynamics that he perceives to be at play. From this he draws the hopeful lesson that the emergency period will also be short-lived.

In less general terms, this response fits within Narayan's longstanding interest in nationalism and federalism. His attitude changed over the decades from hostility to States reorganisation to participation in peace missions in Nagaland and Kashmir, which led him to advocate for smaller and more autonomous states. But he remained concerned with how to

reconcile the right to self-determination and the need for overall unity.[52] With reference to events in Bangladesh, this is evident in his entry for 18 August 1975, which expresses relief that Bangladesh will retain the name of the "People's Republic", that there will not be "any constitutional links forged with Pakistan - confederation, association or anything else like that," and "Bangladesh is not going to become anyone's satellite" (1977b: 19-20). Despite his empathy with Aurangzeb, there is evidence here of unease at the prospect of a latter day example of 'Muslim rule', another Islamic state on India's borders. The reference to satellites expresses the same concern in the idiom of geopolitics. At the international level his support for national self-determination is part of his support for non-alignment, which leads him to view both the USSR and US with suspicion. This attitude is manifest in an elaborate conspiracy theory about the emergency being a Soviet take-over plot. In the entry for 22 July 1975 he predicts a time will come when "having squeezed the juice out of Mrs Gandhi, the Russians through the CPI and their Trojan horses within the Congress will dump her on the garbage heap of history and install in her place their own man" (ibid: 3-4). He also writes of the role of the Americans in spreading disinformation. False rumours that Bangladesh will be renamed the Islamic Republic are revealed to originate from a US news agency, leading him to wonder why the Americans are "always up to this kind of mischief" (ibid: 20).

His awareness of a range of competing perspectives during the cold war era informs his analysis of the international coverage of the event, which he receives prior to the Indian press commentary. Because of the wide range of media from distant countries that he refers to, some in languages he could not read or even understand, I am assuming that he came across their contents through news digests on international radio, but this is not specified.

[52] In a press statement released on 5 November 1956, he declares that "the conception of India as a Union of States is entirely wrong and contrary to fact and historical development. The analogy neither of USA nor of USSR applies to our country. India is one nation and one country and therefore one state" (Narayan 1970: 213). In 1968, during a speech on "Kashmir and India" (ibid: 304-305), he was claiming to be no admirer of the "outmoded and outdated" concept of the nation-state and describing the Indian version as "a haphazard creation owing to the tragedy of partition", albeit one whose geographical borders must be respected now that they have been demarcated. Narayan's interest in Kashmir dates back to the pre-Independence period when he had supported the Quit Kashmir movement launched by Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference, and was in keeping with his opposition to princely states and monarchical rule generally (Puri 2005: 15).

He mentions coverage in Russia, France, Yugoslavia and the US specifically, and makes vaguer references to the European and Western press in general (ibid: 20). Russia and the Russian press are said to be predictably silent or noncommittal, whereas the communist press in Europe sees the hand of the CIA in the event, *L'Humanité* being the most explicit in making this claim. Non-communist European papers are apparently divided, some viewing it as a US-backed rightist coup, others discerning the support of China. Only Yugoslavia "regrets the eclipse of the policy of non-alignment for which Mujib stood" (ibid).

All these readings are ultimately rejected as Narayan decides that the "affair was a domestic event" (ibid). When further details of the killing emerge on 22 August 1975 (ibid: 27-28), he identifies it as an assertion of oligarchic power in accordance with a familiar pattern. The precautionary murder of all available members of Mujib's family is said to be a return to the "barbaric feudal days…when brother killed brother to seize the crown" (ibid: 27). Nevertheless, he struggles to reconcile the barbarity of this act with the military regime's continued espousal of the tenets of 'Mujidabad' (nationalism, socialism, secularism and democracy): "His (Mushtaq Ahmed) taking over supreme martial law power while still talking of democracy, I can understand. All dictators talk like this. We have our own Mrs Gandhi. But why destroy the entire Mujib family?" (ibid). He leaves open the possibility of third-party involvement and concludes "the truth will only emerge from the passage of time" (ibid). In a context of censorship and distortion of information, all received accounts are refused, past, present and future elided.

Although Narayan may have be sensitive to both "the literal and connotative" levels of the accounts he receives, his response to them does more than simply engage in an "oppositional reading" along lines delimited by the process of "encoding" (Hall 1980:137-138). By reading various "hegemonic codes" *against* one another, he effects something like the "contraction or distention of temporalities", which Rancière specifies as necessary for thinking and writing democratic history (2011c: 65). With reference to the novels of Virginia

Woolf, Rancière speaks of the "liberating political possibilities" of modes of individuation and the interlinking of sequences, which challenge "the formatting of reality" of state-controlled media, by "undoing the relations between the visible, the sayable, and the thinkable", thereby establishing a grid that makes it possible to think of "political dissensuality" (ibid: 65).

This 'grid' was outlined in one of the J.P. movement's most famous slogans: "sampoorna kranti ab nara hai, bhawi itihaas hamara hai" (Narayan 1977b: 128 – "total revolution is now the slogan, future history belongs to us"), conveying a sense of what would be the retrospective historical significance of this 'second Independence struggle'. In Narayan's prison writings it seems to be expressed in two registers. Listening to radio reports of the massacre brings up the suggestion of 'eternal recurrence' and even 'regression' – back to the "barbaric feudal days…when brother killed brother" – thus punctuating the 'progressive' pretensions of the new regime. Reading about those days allows him to invoke the 'future anterior', to kick the traces of the present to reveal the pattern of the past, in order to evoke a different distribution of power and demarcation of territorial boundaries.

"We, representing the entire political spectrum in the country"

Unlike Narayan, Advani was always in the company of other detenus, and at various points in his book he refers to the political leaders with whom he has been arrested as friends and colleagues, a comradeship that extends across party lines. This is of a piece with the composition of the Janata Party itself, which was formed out of a conglomeration of parties opposed to Indira Gandhi's Congress. Advani describes all party discussions on what stance to take towards Narayan, whose call for the police and army to revolt alienated some detenus (1978: 50-51), and of how and to what extent to form a coalition with left parties

that oppose the emergency (ibid: 48). These ties would be stretched to the limit in later discussions over whether it is possible to be a member of the party and the Hindu nationalist paramilitary organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Arguments over dual-membership of the RSS would eventually lead to the break-up of Janata, but during this unusual time, and in these extreme circumstances, affiliations seemed to extend across ideological lines.

Both the Jammat-i-Islami and the RSS were banned during the emergency, and Advani recounts strategic political alliances and improbable friendships formed in the common space of the jail. In an entry for 5 July 1975 he tells of how the jail authorities had separated the RSS members from "the Jamaat people", who were being detained alongside those held on smuggling charges, "obviously prompted by considerations of religious homogeneity" – the smugglers presumably being Muslim (ibid: 17). The Jammat detenus are said to have protested against the classification, which led to "political prisoners" (an unofficial but respected status) being housed with those suspected of criminal activity (ibid: 17-18). Advani reports that "adjustments were accordingly made" and remarks upon the hypocrisy of an apparently secular government perpetuating "religious and other denominations by every one of its acts" (ibid: 17).

It was during the emergency itself that the word 'secular' was added to the preamble of the Indian constitution, in a rebuttal of the 'non-secular' forces that had opposed Indira Gandhi. These forces were to meet in emergency-era jails and unite in opposition to Indira Gandhi's rule, a manoeuvre which strongly recalls the cross-denominational alliances encouraged by colonial repression during the Khilafat movement. In both instances religion may have served to mobilise resistance to state repression, but religious differences had to be spanned in order to do so on a national scale.

Another similarity with the Khilafat movement was the 'cosmopolitan' aspect to this reaching beyond the confines of given identities and political positions. Advani describes

reading media in various languages and coming from national and international sources against each other, and doing so in the company of other detenus who act as a fact-checking and critical chorus. Early in his book Advani describes how censorship of the press had meant that "the Indian student of public affairs has no option but to tune in to foreign broadcasting media. I took it upon myself to keep track of reports regarding India relayed by the BBC, Voice of America, Voice of Germany and Radio Australia…Radio Moscow, Peking Radio and Radio Pakistan." (Ibid: 17). On a previous occasion, in the entry for 4 August 1975, he describes an instance when someone in the News Services Division of All India Radio had "bungled" and allowed the Punjabi and Urdu divisions to report on proposals to amend the Representation of the People Act, information that had been removed from the English bulletin (ibid: 32).

Both aspects come together in his account of Indira Gandhi performing the flag hoisting ceremony on Independence Day, which he was able to watch on a television set kept in the canteen of Rohtak jail. Advani describes how "we, representing practically the entire political spectrum in the country", could not comprehend an allusion in Indira Gandhi's speech to an opposition ruler who had ridiculed the tricolour as a "rag" (ibid: 38). This leads to an excursus on Dalit politics in Maharashtra from Socialist Party leader Madhu Dandavate, who explains that a member of the Dalit Panthers, a faction of the Republican Party in Maharashtra, had made this remark, and that ironically he is a supporter of Indira Gandhi.

The detainees also comment upon the otherwise mellow tone of the speech and Indira Gandhi's unconvincing performance of anger. She is said to be "making a special effort to look enraged" when referring to the opposition at the beginning of her speech, but her "worked-up wrath" fails to impress (ibid). (With a television broadcast there is also the opportunity to read a speaker's physical expressions against his words.) The mystery is resolved when Advani listens to the Voice of America morning news bulletin and hears about

the military coup in Bangladesh and the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He shares the news with the other inmates, who react with shocked disbelief. A few days previously Dandavate had heard a radio broadcast announcing the resignation of eight Cabinet ministers and relayed the information to the other prisoners, who only realised later that this had occurred in Argentina and not India. Advani's report of a coup in Bangladesh is met with doubt by the others, and this makes him wait for confirmation of what he has heard.

Advani begins trying to get reception of a medium wave radio station to see if any regional language broadcast might be available. He finally gets a Marathi news bulletin, which declares that Mujib had sent an Independence Day greeting to the Indian President. But he soon comes across Voice of America and BBC reports which give "full accounts of the gory events in Dacca that morning" (ibid: 39). He also listens to Dacca Radio, which broadcasts the swearing in of the new Head of State (ibid: 40). All India Radio, meanwhile, takes five hours to report that a coup has taken place (ibid), and a full account of the killings does not appear until much later.

"Clog the openings and you run the risk of explosions", Advani concludes (ibid: 39), referring to events occurring in both Bangladesh and India. A kind of structural-functionalism informs this image of power and information as self-determining forces, substances that burst through repression, and Advani was aware of its theoretical underpinnings. According to him this episode corroborates the thesis of an article by Ashis Nandy that was amongst some books and journals sent by friends outside. Titled "Invitation to a beheading: A psychologist's guide to assassinations in the third world", the article predicts that Indira Gandhi will be murdered if she persists with her current course of action. Assassination is described as one of four available means of political competition in closed regimes: "revolution, rebellion, coup and assassination" (ibid: 170), and said to be the cheapest of the four, as it requires the least organization, planning and popular assent. Therefore it is at "a

premium in the Third World", in some parts of it, such as Latin America, becoming "a standard means of deciding political succession" (ibid: 171).

But all of the above suggests that repression also encouraged a search for alternative news-sources in other media and various languages, encouraged reading across this media, alliances across previously existing lines and critical reception of both official and unofficial information. Obstructions, gaps and misunderstandings in the information matrix encouraged readings in an oppositional code and the coming together of previously antagonistic groups in opposition to the emergency regime.

As with the 'first' Independence movement, this was an ambiguous and volatile process. Because of its incorporation of elements from across the political spectrum, from Naxalites to Hindu nationalist organisations, around the amorphous goal of 'total revolution' and under the charismatic leadership of Narayan, the J.P. movement has sometimes been labelled 'fascist'. (A pamphlet collected in part two of Advani's *Scrapbook*, "Anatomy of Fascism", reverses this accusation [ibid: 249-269]). Even those who participated in it have subsequently expressed the possibility that it was 'regressive'. In an interview given in 2000, Socialist Party politician Dandavate questions the inclusion of the Jana Sangh.[53] Narayan is said to have believed that only the total mobilisation of forces opposed to the emergency could have brought about its revocation, and, given the 1977 election results, he may well have been justified in his belief. But, speaking to an interviewer in the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, during a time when a BJP government was in power at the centre, Dandavate regrets the long-term repercussions of this move. Communal forces such as the Jana Sangh are said to have gained respectability during the Janata period, whilst the Socialists fell into decline.

[53] Madhu Dandavate. (interviewee), recorded by Smt. Usha Prasad (interviewer), 12th December 2000, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Oral History Project (778)

Dandavate may well have been thinking about the career of former prison-mate L.K. Advani, who had risen to the position of Home Minister in the BJP government. Advani had come to political prominence a second time in the 1990s, as one of the leaders of the campaign to build a temple on the site of the Babri masjid, culminating in the violent destruction of the mosque in 1992. Advani had launched the campaign to rebuild the temple with a procession from Somnath, site of a temple repeatedly destroyed by Muslim rulers and controversially renovated by the Congress government in 1951, to Ayodhya, the north Indian town in which the Babri Masjid was located. Through "nine states over thirty-six days" he travelled across India in a vehicle modelled on a chariot:

> The image of chariot helped convey the idea that here was a righteous mission undertaken by a spiritual figure, somewhat like the mythological epics shown over the last three and a half years in weekly television serials. Advani disclosed there had been some pressure on him to put on saffron robes, and said that as a political rather than religious figure, it was against his beliefs to do such a thing. Whatever his beliefs were, the elaborate paintings of Ram and the proposed Ayodhya temple, Advani's wayside pujas which he performed wearing a crown, the slogan-shouting, saffron-bedecked volunteers swarming around the procession, and his speeches themselves left no doubt about the campaign's appeal to religious sentiment.
> (Rajagopal 2001: 193)

Coming from someone as avowedly political and reputedly secular as Advani (a Sindhi Hindu un-associated with the north Indian Hindu identity at play in the Ayodhya movement), the opportunism of his actions seemed blatant. It also seemed to contrast with his liberal emergency-era politics, which in his prison writings is expressed in a concern with civil liberties and human rights. Opposition to the death penalty in India is occasioned by inspection of a gallows (Advani 1978: 58). Discussion of a UN General Assembly resolution prohibiting torture, unlawful arrest and detention, follows a meeting with a school teacher who has been badly beaten by police officers (ibid: 88). The resolution had been supported by the Indian representative at the UN during the emergency itself, and in the English translation of the RSS history of the period, in an illustrated chapter titled "Atrocities", this is likened to "the Devil quoting the scriptures" (Sahasrabuddhe and Vajpayee 1991: 242). Advani's account is drier. Displaying a stronger sense of the international, of history, and,

arguably, with an eye on future and foreign readerships, he leaves out the detail that India had signed the resolution and focuses instead on the role played by Greece in sponsoring the motion (1978: 88).

Across the *Scrapbook* as a whole Advani's references are often non-Indian (Thomas Jefferson, Cesare Pavese, Solzhenitsyn), and the political ideology that comes across most strongly is a liberalism with few local inflections. The single extended religious reference stands out because of its incongruity. The "sins of these past few months are not Indira Gandhi's alone", he writes, but the "collective guilt" of all Congressmen, regardless of whether they actively supported her or merely acquiesced: "Bhishma and Drona were as much responsible for the outrageous disrobing of Draupadi as were Duryodhana and Dushasana"(ibid: 78). This is footnoted as an allusion "to an episode in the Mahabharata" (ibid), which says something about whom Advani imagines his readers would be. These liberal attitudes therefore seem to be no less of a 'performance' than his later actions in Ayodhya: a response to a particular context and imagined audience – a future Anglophone readership, in India and elsewhere, rather than a national electorate.

Religious references were to return in his next book, *The People Betrayed* (1979), which deals with disintegration of the Janata Party on the, in his view, pretext of joint membership of the RSS. Advani describes the RSS as the "hobgoblin" of Indian politics, a scare figure that other parties could draw upon to frighten Muslim voters (ibid: 80-81), and elaborates on this insight with reference to the war diary of Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Information and Propaganda of National Socialist Germany, said to be one of the "precious documents" recovered by the Americans from post-war Germany:

> Analysts of Nazi propaganda techniques are all agreed that one of the cardinal principles of their strategy was: there must always be an enemy for the people to identify as the cause of all their problems; all propaganda must be keyed to ensuring that hatred against the enemy does not sag. The Bolsheviks and the Jews were favourite hate-objects of Nazi propaganda (ibid: 80)

During such moments Advani demonstrates an awareness of what Laclau, in his work on fascism and ideology, has described as the importance of "an antagonistic relationship with a dominant bloc" in the process of popular-democratic interpellations, which produce the subject known as the "people" (1979: 107). These are independent of any precise class content and therefore available to "quite distinct political discourses", including fascism (ibid: 111). Hence the difficulty in identifying the politics of the J.P. Movement on a right-left spectrum, because of its use of such a wide range of popular-democratic interpellations to oppose Indira Gandhi's regime – variously appealing to liberal ideas of civil liberties, socialist ideals, revolutionary notions of non-violent struggle and religious beliefs. In this way, it seems to bear out political theorist Ernesto Laclau's criticism of the assumption that "the 'people' as a historical actor will be constituted around a progressive identity (from the point of view of the Left)" (2007: 246). Rather than embracing emancipatory politics, supplementary subjects may well construct their uncountability in what he describes as a 'fascist' direction, but this, too, is not an inevitable process. Even with reference to a single figure, Advani, and a single party, Janata, affiliations can be seen to shift according to audience and context.

Reader voters

One of the notable features of the emergency was the apparently comprehensive but transitory nature of its acceptance, making it hard to tell how state messages were being received. In their essay on the period, Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph note how "opportunism and fear, joined with conventional prudence and apathy", combined with state and party influence on the economy and associational life to produce "many of the outer signs of totalitarianism" (1978: 386). Congress's defeat in the March 1977 election is said to have revealed this to be a "temporary adaptation rather than adherence based on conviction"

(ibid). But if the 1977 election result was, as they claim, an endorsement of "a liberal state and a democratic regime" (ibid: 399), what to make of Indira Gandhi's re-election just a few years later in 1980, which aroused concerns that Indians were "indifferent to the dangers of authoritarianism and more concerned with the price of onions" (Weiner 1983: 134)? These fears have been periodically revived – they were an aspect of the response to Modi's election victory in 2014, which I will go on to discuss in the next chapter – and significant areas of Indian territory continue to be subject to emergency ordinances, but an internal emergency on the scale of that which was proclaimed in 1975-77 has not been attempted since.

In a recent book on liberalism in India, Christopher Bayly attributes Indians' apparent resistance to totalitarian ideologies to the radical individualism of a strain of Hinduism, which is said to have prevented "the creation by the state or political leaderships of an Indian 'socialist man' or 'fascist man'" (2012: 24). But accounts of media reception in China (Latham 2000) and of the double-lives led by citizens of the German Democratic Republic (Darnton 1995) suggest that such adaptive behaviour is not the preserve of any particular religious or cultural tradition. Rather, it would seem to result from the double-edged instrumentality of the modern state, closely intertwined processes of increased education *and* control of populations.

The paradoxical operations of this dynamic can be seen in the fact that an election was called and held during the internal emergency itself, and also, as already mentioned, in the 'progressive' agenda that was its ostensible justification, as expressed in Indira Gandhi's Twenty Point Economic Programme. The autocratic actions of this ostensibly socialist politician closely resembled the attitude of British liberals during the colonial period who espoused the principle of liberty but believed it did not apply to childlike barbarians "in need of direction by benign imperial authority" (Bayly 2012: 13). Despite different "core notions" regarding the relationship between individual and community, they shared what the political

theorist Michael Freeden, in a discussion of eugenics and progressive thought, has described as an "idea environment" (1983); specifically, a "developmental" concept of history rather than a "cyclical or accumulative" one (Freeden 2013: 960).

Successive decisions to declare emergency and elections seem to result from a tension between what Freeden has described as the two defining axes of liberalism: "horizontal-spatial and vertical-temporal" (ibid: 236-237). Along the horizontal axis, rights and duties are ascribed to individuals, and the role of the state is limited to that of "harm preventer" and "boundary policer" – maintainer of "space and separation" between the public and private domains (ibid: 237). Along the vertical, a "secular gospel of humanity" is promoted, aimed at "individual progress and fulfilment, as well as emancipating peoples at earlier stages of advancement" (ibid). The state is tasked with fulfilment of this "temporally oriented creed that elicits the march of civilisation on the macro-level, and individual flourishing on the micro-level" (ibid). Where the two 'axes' intersect is in their attribution of an ombudsman position to the state. In both, it decides upon the direction of development and what Rancière describes as "the distribution of the sensible" (2011c: 12)). That is, the simultaneous disclosure and delimitation of "something in common" through a "system of self-evident facts of sense perception" (ibid). Concretely, on the 'need' for temporary suspension of civil liberties and the redefinition of the private-public boundary that occurred during the Indian emergency of 1975-77 – incursions into dwelling spaces and bodies involved in 'slum' demolitions and forcible sterilisation programmes, which were justified as being in the 'public' interest.

The developmental mandate for emergency-era repression has come to be judged as spurious, and to have been based on a faulty pedagogic model, encapsulated in the first point of Sanjay Gandhi's Five Point Programme: "each one teach one". Frankel in her book on India's post-Independence economy attributes the un-success of the Twenty-Point Program to the "quixotic" nature of its attempt to establish "grass-roots organization for

popular mobilization by fiat from above" (2005: 549). She concludes that the emergency was less remarkable for its excesses against individuals, which followed a familiar pattern of "corruption and abuse of authority associated with unrestricted power", than for its failure to use absolute powers to bring about basic social change (ibid: 564). In a comparative study of emergency regimes in India, Korea and the Philippines, Das Gupta describes how even according to its own limited understanding of economic development as productive growth, the emergency regime in India was a failure, as the ambitious Twenty Point Programme was whittled down to Sanjay Gandhi's Five Points, which were further collapsed into two: "voluntary tree planting and involuntary sterilization" (1978: 335). Das Gupta also points to the wider context that emboldened the rulers of these countries to take this action: talk of the need for a "Strong will, strong discipline, and a strong state", which evoked support from "advocates of liberal models of development for poor countries who would be noticeably suspicious if these same terms were to be applied at home" (ibid: 325).

Such attitudes were informed by a colonial legacy of "constitutional autocracy", whereby emergency powers were used to limit democratic self-governance, understood to be a potential threat "as dangerous as war, rebellion or internal disturbance" (Kalhan 2010: 120). This legacy enabled both Indira Gandhi and Mujib to use constitutional provisions to centralise power in their own hands: Mujib in 1975 passing the fourth amendment to the constitution of Bangladesh, Indira Gandhi in 1977 passing the forty-second amendment to the Indian constitution. Its persistence in the post-colonial period, adoption by democratic states rather than empires, suggests an even more fundamental tension inherent in what Jacques Rancière has described as the oligarchic tendencies of *all* states (2006b: 73).

This dynamic can be perceived in the history of democratic struggles in both 'undeveloped' colony and metropole, with liberals' faith in their own "civility and reasonableness" making them resistant to extending political rights to those without property, religious and racial minorities, women and colonial subjects (Mitchell 2011: 14).

These qualities were believed to qualify them "to act as spokespersons for the interests of those who were not yet ready to speak for themselves", be they national peoples or colonial subjects (ibid). As well as being grounded in faith in their own superiority, this "not yet" was derived from a theory of learning in which the movement from ignorance to understanding is brought about through external intervention. It is this concept of understanding, according to Rancière, which "causes all the trouble", brings a halt to the movement of reason (1991: 8). Through their preoccupation with making things understood, "men of methods and progressives" are said to bring about stultification (ibid). Rancière's own pedagogical model proceeds from assumptions about "the irreducibility of equality" (2006b: 48) and the value of distance in setting off the "poetic labour of translation", which is said to be at the heart of all learning (2009b: 10). These assumptions form the basis of his own ideal of the "ignorant schoolmaster", from whom the student learns something that he himself does not know as an effect of the mastery that forces him to search and verify this research (ibid: 14).

Something along these lines was exercised by people engaged in democratic struggles against the colonial state in India, who preferred to look to non-British theoretical models, "to the liberalism of France, Spain or Italy, or to American republicanism" (Bayly 2012: 4), or who otherwise picked and chose aspects of British liberalism that suited them. Say, in adhering to the principle of liberty, overlooked the fact that many of its British advocates such as John Stuart Mill believed it did not apply to colonial subjects. Through these means Indians during the colonial period are said to have been able to "excavate, appropriate and cannibalise the thought of European and American liberals in their search for a modicum of freedom" (ibid: 11).

In the postcolonial period, something along these lines also occurred during the Indian emergency of 1975-1977, during which the pedagogic operations of the state taught the populations so invoked something that it, the police order, did not itself know, and as a result momentarily coalesced groups in ways that it did not anticipate. This process could be

perceived in the cross denominational alliances forged in prisons, but also in the 1977 election result, which saw Muslims support the Janata Party in large numbers despite its incorporation of former members of the Hindu nationalist Jana Sangh. The Janata party and its allies won 328 seats out of 542 whilst Congress only gained 153 (Weiner 1978: 67). Almost all of the leaders of the Janata party were elected, and often by large margins. The union leader George Fernandes won his seat with a margin of 330,000 despite being in jail during the entire election campaign (ibid). Congress won only two seats in north India (ibid: 69), historic centre of Congress party power, but also site of some of the worst excesses of the emergency, many of which disproportionately affected Muslims.

Weiner describes scenes in the streets of Delhi as the results came in:

> People seemed elated by the knowledge of what their votes had done. At the large billboard on Parliament Street a group was asked who they thought would be India's next prime minister. Did they prefer Morarji Desai, Jagjivan Ram, or Charan Singh? "It doesn't matter," said one of the men. "If we don't like the prime minister we can always replace him."
> (ibid: 60)

Voters seemed to be voting not so much for a particular party or programme, but against an autocratic regime, and in affirmation of what Rancière has described as the democratic scandal: the "drawing of lots" which is the essence of democracy, with its scandalous revelation that "the government of societies cannot but rest in the last resort on its own contingency" (2006b: 47). A form of community, approximating 'the people', seems to have been momentarily coalesced through the anonymity of the voting process and the shared experience of reading competing hegemonic articulations against the grain. ("As the reader passes through the various perspectives offered by the text, and relates the different views and patterns to one another, he sets the work in motion, and so sets himself in motion, too" [Iser 1980: 106]). But this grouping was based in the substitutability of persons rather than co-presence, and forged through the alienability of the word rather than 'transparent' communication.

Chapter four: The model code of conduct and the scandal of democracy

This chapter picks up on the preceding discussion of the 1977 election and the thesis's overall concern with state regulation of public communication during special periods, by examining the workings of electoral law. In its report on the Third General Elections in India, held in 1962, the Election Commission of India (ECI), the constitutionally established body that administers elections in India, mentions a code of conduct evolved just prior to the 1960 legislative assembly elections in "the politically conscious State of Kerala" (ECI 1965: 58-61). The code covered campaigning activities, and its emphasis was on maintaining public order and respecting "the right of every individual for peaceful undisturbed home life". Meetings and processions had to be planned and approved well in advance, with a view to avoiding disruption to members of the public and clashes with other political parties. Speeches and slogans delivered from public platforms were required to observe a "high standard of decency and decorum". Derogatory remarks about "the private lives, personal habits or physical peculiarities" of individuals, or their "religion, caste or community", were to be avoided. Likewise posters and placards that sought to humiliate individuals or ridicule "the beliefs and practices of the followers of any religious or political thought". The burning of effigies of political rivals would not be countenanced.

Judging the exercise to have been a success, the ECI decided to circulate this code to political parties and state governments during the 1962 election, and in 1968 framed its own Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of Candidates and Political Parties.[54] The Model Code had, and continues to have, non-statutory force, is dependent upon the cooperation of the political parties. But over the years it has moved beyond its original emphasis on preserving public order to creating a level playing field of political competition. As a result it has evolved into "a terrain of contest" between the political parties and the Election

[54] Text of the Model Code of Conduct available from: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/modelcodeofconduct_noticies.aspx (accessed 19/09/2015).

Commission of India, which, the political scientist Ujjwal Kumar Singh argues, has allowed the ECI to entrench its position as a "rule-making and rule enforcing body" (Singh 2012: 150). Singh identifies two phases during which this happened: after the internal emergency of 1975-77 and during the 1990s. The Election Commission had played a significant role in encouraging Indians to vote without fear in the 1977 election conducted during the emergency itself. Afterwards, in 1979, it added an extra section to the Code, curtailing the power of the ruling party to avail of state resources for electioneering purposes. Building on a post-emergency vision of the Election Commission as the protector of the voice of the people, the Code was further strengthened following the appointment of T.N. Seshan as Chief Election Commissioner in 1990. Seshan introduced new restrictions on campaign expenditure and publicity, intended, he claimed, to curb the corrupting effect of "the three Ms: Minister-Power, Muscle-Power and Money-Power" (1995: 264). His efforts often involved him in direct confrontations with the government, politicians and the press, and the Model Code of Conduct was an important weapon in these battles.

Situated at the crossroads of law, politics and society, the Code offers a useful vantage-point for exploring the relationship between the principle of popular sovereignty and the practice of conducting elections. This chapter will focus this discussion on tensions inherent in the idea of elections conducted in society and overseen by the state as free expression of the voice of the people. These tensions are often thought to be particularly acute in post-colonial states with multicultural societies such as India. In their introduction to a special edition of *Election Law Journal*, for example, Gilmartin and Moog attribute the difference in the way in 'the "voice of the people"' is conceptualized in the US and the Indian system to their different histories and social structures (2012: 147). In the US this concept is said to be rooted in a market model view of society according to which the people's voice emerges from a marketplace of choices made by individuals between "competing ideas and interests" (ibid). As a result regulation of elections is viewed as necessary but limited in

scope. In post-Independence India, on the other hand, voting has been linked to a vision of national citizenship, which seeks to transcend the structures of an authoritarian colonial state and a society segmented by "caste, region, religion, community, and patronage" (ibid). Electoral regulation is seen as more than a necessity, and the Election Commission of India, positioned 'apart' from government and 'above' politics, is tasked with and authorized by realization of this vision.

I hope to extend this discussion by looking at the metropolitan precursors and colonial precepts of electoral reform in India, and data I collected during fieldwork in the north Indian State of Uttar Pradesh in the run-up to the 2014 national election (from December 2013 – May 2014). The popular mandate for the winning Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its Prime Ministerial candidate, Narendra Modi, in the 2014 Indian election would appear to have been unequivocal. The BJP won the election with an outright majority (282 seats out of 543), the first achieved by a single political party since 1984, when Congress had swept polls conducted after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Together with its coalition partners in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) the BJP garnered a total of 336 seats to the Congress-led coalition's 60. (Congress itself won only 44 seats, well short of the 55 needed to form an official opposition.) The people had spoken and chosen, it seemed, in what has come to be seen as one of the most significant post-Independence Indian elections.

A fairly typical version of this opinion is expressed by an editorial that appeared in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, which hails the result as a second, real Independence Day for India. "Today, 18 May 2014, may well go down in history as the day when Britain finally left India" (Anon 2014). Up until now, it claims, for much of the time universal suffrage had given Indians a vote but not a voice. The 1977 post-emergency election is said to have been an exception, and what it indicated about the "volcanic capacity" of this voice to have been realized by the 2014 result. The voice of the people had endorsed a new kind of political leader in Modi (lower caste, non-Anglophone) and thereby ushered in a new

India, which rejects an older politics of state patronage and vote banks. Alongside references to anti-colonial struggle, in these comments one sees vestiges of what Chatterjee has described as "the old liberal paradigm of civic pedagogy" (2011: 145) that allowed John Stuart Mill to recommend paternal British rule for India until its people became mature enough to govern themselves. Finally, according to this British newspaper, Indians had obtained the political maturity required to participate in representative democracy.

In this chapter I will counter claims that the 2014 election marked a break with an older politics of caste and religion through reference to the history of electoral reform in India and an account of the communally charged Uttar Pradesh phase of this election. More generally, I will take issue with theories of mediation that equate voting with speaking. I do not do so out of faith in the possibility of "authentic democracy", based in "an ideal democratic decision-making situation" in which decision makers and citizens are "co-present" (Young 2000: 126), and to which any general election would fall well short. (Certainly the 2014 Indian election, in which the BJP won only 31% of the vote, the lowest ever share of any party to win a majority.) Nor do I proceed from a more modest concern to separate speech from acts, which moves the literary critic Stanley Fish when he writes against extension of the First Amendment to cover expression of opinion through the act of voting (2011).[55] Rather, out of scepticism about the transparency of all speech *and* action. I have therefore been drawn to theories that approach representation from the perspective of science and technology studies and aesthetic theory, which are more attuned to its contingent nature.

Scepticism about the transparency of communicative action is of course not new to political theory. By transposing Habermas's ideal speech situation to the practice of democratic representation, the political theorist Iris Marion Young underscores its contradictions. Elections, as opposed to town meetings, do not easily lend themselves to his

[55] In Fish's opinion a vote's meaning is "exhausted by its function in a procedure (to say yes or no)", therefore someone who has been denied exercise of a vote "has not been denied the expression of anything" (Fish 2011).

model of un-coerced participants freely evaluating one another's assertions. Young uses the Derridean concept of différance to acknowledge the impact of "intervals of space and time" and the necessary separation between constituents and representatives in mass democracy (2000: 127). In order to dissolve the paradox of how one person can stand for many she rethinks representation as "a differentiated relationship among plural actors" (ibid). The Habermasian ideal of democracy as a "reasonable" communicative process between citizens and public officials is tempered by a pared-down definition of the "reasonable" as a willingness to be accountable to others (ibid: 52). The potential for exclusion of disenfranchised groups and unorthodox modes of expression is mitigated by deployment of three modes of communication: "greeting, rhetoric and narrative" (ibid: 53). This approach is sensitive to the hazards of mediation and attempts to address them by leaving scope for the non-cognitive, the rhetorical and symbolic, but it does not pay much attention to the technical means by which elections are conducted. Human beings and human speech remain central to its normative account of deliberative democracy.

Other more empirically based, historical and ethnographic studies of elections have paid closer attention to their material aspects, looking at them in terms of rituals and practices, techniques and technology (Hauser and Singer 1986; Banerjee 2007 and 2011; Bertrand et al 2007; Coles 2004; Garrigou 2002 and 2012). The historical ethnographies contained in *The Hidden History of the Secret Ballot* (Bertrand et al 2007), for example, combine these approaches to deal with "the material *mediation* of such forms of subjectivation in different cultures of voting by the secret ballot as a *technology*" (Bertrand et al 2007: 8). In their introduction to this volume, Bertrand et al urge social scientists to see through the "fetishism" of electoral technologies by "electoral engineers" (ibid), say, assumptions about the secret ballot as a democratic ideal, and to carefully study the social relationships and material practices in which they are implicated. They describe the ballot as something that oscillates between the material and the social, between being a technique,

defined as '"matters of practical construction"', and technology, '"a system of such means and methods"' (ibid, both definitions are attributed to Raymond Williams). The relative autonomy of ballot technology combined with its dual material and social nature is said to explain why it is able to both discipline voters and allow for subversive action. Combining Foucault's theories of subjectification with Michel de Certau's work on the practice of everyday life, subversive action is described as "creative performance", tactical appropriation of a technological device "leading to unpredictable but long-lasting changes in its functioning" (ibid: 11).

This account goes beyond the "traditional definition of technique as the imposition of form consciously planned onto shapeless matter" (Latour 1994: 52-53) by being more attentive to the unpredictability of their performance and reception. However, a tautological view of techniques/technology as socially constructed persists and is accompanied by an Althusserian notion of the state apparatus, in which the state imposes its rigid order on society; or, in this case, attempts to, with its "'secret ballot is freedom' ideology" (Bertrand et al 2007: 3), but does not quite succeed. As Latour observes, in claiming that forces of domination and exclusion work through the medium of artifacts to disguise themselves as natural and objective, critical theory adds conspiracy theory to a tautology and leaves unexplained why artifacts enter social relations in the first place (Latour 1994: 53). He argues that rather than reflecting or hiding these relations artifacts help to "remake" them, and substitutes "*collective*", the co-mingling of humans and nonhumans in a corporate body, for what he describes as "the tainted word *society*" (ibid: 46, italics in the original). For subversive action or resistance he posits technical action/mediation (the two terms are used interchangeably), meaning the ability to mobilise "moves made elsewhere, earlier, by other actants" (ibid: 52). The co-presence of the past and the distant, of non-human characters, is said to free us from social interactions, "what we manage to do, right away, with our humble

social skills", and in this way set us apart from other socially complex animals: "That we are not Machiavellian baboons we owe to technical action" (ibid).

With regard to the notion of the state apparatus, Rancière questions the idea of a state-society binary by emphasising that the distribution of roles and spaces results as much from "the assumed spontaneity of social relations as from the rigidity of state functions" (1998: 29). He speaks instead of an opposition between politics and the police, meaning by the latter an order of bodies that allocates ways of doing, being and saying, which does not "discipline" those bodies so much as govern their appearance. The "police" would turn the workplace into a private space, where a worker's part is defined by remuneration of his work rather than regulation proper to the public domain. All states are "police states" in that they are informed by a "state logic" which seeks to fix and control "identities, spaces and movements", but this logic is not exclusive to the state (Rancière 2010b). In his "Ten Theses on Politics", politics is specifically opposed to the police because it "makes visible that which had no reason to be seen" (Rancière 2001). It is therefore distinct from a model of communicative action that assumes its participants are pre-constituted. Those who would make visible an unseen world cannot rely upon a "pragmatics of communication". The essence of politics is instead said to lie in "dissensus", a type of political argument that does not involve conflict over interests or opinions but "the construction of a paradoxical world that relates two separate worlds". For example, a worker who seeks to make a "domestic" wage dispute public has to demonstrate the world in which his argument counts as one to those who do not possess a frame of reference to conceive of it as such.

The intervention of subjects supplementary to the figure of the citizen voter, in places outside those designated by executive and representative power (the workplace, the school, the street), is described as democratic action. Democracy itself is said to be founded upon the seventh title to rule, in reference to the seventh qualification to govern enumerated in Book III of Plato's *Laws*: "'the choice of God' or, otherwise said, the 'drawing

of lots'" (Rancière 2010a: 31). That is, it is based in the absence of *any* entitlement to govern. As a result it is opposed to the oligarchic principle that those who rule do so by virtue of some special qualification (birth, wealth, education etc.) It is also distinct from, if not always opposed to, the practice of elections.

In both accounts human agency is de-centred and made possible by non-human intervention – through technical mediation, by the intercession of 'divine' chance. These interventions have the salutary effect of preventing power from being the preserve of those who want it. This is implicit in Latour's reflections on what is specific to human action in response to biological anthropologist Shirley Strum's descriptions of primate "soap opera" (Latour 1994: 52). It recurs explicitly in Rancière's thought, for example, in an interview given on the occasion of the 2012 French Presidential elections (Rancière 2012).

Both theorists also refuse what Iris Marion Young describes as "a metaphysics of presence" that assumes citizens to be pre-existent and would have rulers and ruled be co-identical (Young 2002: 126). In addition to being impractical in mass democracies, this ideal has often worked to favour the interests of representatives over and above those of the people they claim to represent. In his history of the rise of popular sovereignty in England and America, Edmund Morgan highlights how by claiming power in the name of "*the* people" they were able to shed "the local, subject character that made them representatives of a particular set of people" (Morgan 1989: 50).

Viewing 'the people' as a construct, Latour and Rancière are aware that representation involves a great deal more than "simple transmission" (Disch 2008: 91). As Lisa Disch notes in her essay on Latour's political theory, for Latour "a spokesperson is a 'mediator' rather than an 'intermediary'" (ibid). In contrast to a porte parole who simply transports a message or force without transformation, a mediator translates, distorts and modifies the elements he carries. His models for this type of mediation are the microprocesses of negotiation involved in the construction of facts in a laboratory (Latour

and Woolgar 1986); and also their subsequent dissemination, along the great chain of translation, through "drift, betrayal, ambiguity" (1988: 253). Similarly Rancière describes politics as the *manifestation* of dissensus ("the presence of two worlds in one") rather than the *exercise* of power (2001), and identifies an "aesthetics" at the heart of politics, a "system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience" (2011c: 13). He describes representation as a set of relations between "the visible and the invisible, the visible and speech, the said and the unsaid", exemplified by film and photographic reproduction, in which an image is not a duplication of a thing but "an alteration that occurs in a chain of images which alter it in turn" (Rancière 2009b: 93-94). A truly 'faithful' representation is 'promiscuous', it enrolls more actors and makes *things* public (Latour 2005a), renders the unseen visible (Rancière 2011c).

This seems to me like a more useful way to think of popular sovereignty in mass democracies than attempts to reify 'the people' and sacralise their 'power', because of its location of the legitimacy of popular sovereignty in prevention of oligarchic concentration of power rather than the popular exercise of it ('people power'). Its awareness of representation as work, an act of creation, also more accurately reflects the instability of the democratic subject than notions of an "enchanted individual" voter, who by standing outside the world, as an observer, is the "bearer of an almost mystical autonomy" (Gilmartin 2012: 411).

Proceeding from the post-sovereign understanding of human and non-human agency outlined in the introduction, I argue against this tendency to sacralise the voting process by underlining tensions between democracy as an ideal and elections as a practice, which underline what Jacques Rancière describes as the paradox amounting to scandal inherent in the idea of democracy; namely, the *absence* of "a single principle of community that legitimates the actions of those who govern on the basis of laws inherent in the coming

together of human communities" (Rancière 2006b: 297). This absence makes representation a creative act, lends it an aesthetic and techno-political dimension.

I will look at how the dispositif of suffrage has played out in the hands of different actors, through an exploration of some aspects of the history of electoral reform in India, and an account of the 2014 Indian general election. The latter will focus on the communally charged elections in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh in 2014, during which the BJP was able to profit from the unfixity of ascriptive identities and a particular reading of the Code by election officers. I will conclude by reflecting on the implications of this kind of right-wing populist mobilization, which would seem to test Rancière's theory of the supplementary subject and democratic action, and broach the possibility that the "supplementary legality" (Singh 2012: 150) of the Code could enable "democratic 'anarchy'" (Rancière 2001).

The 'sacred' time-space of popular sovereignty

In an essay on the history of election law in India, David Gilmartin quotes a Supreme Court Judgment on an appeal case presented in Andhra Pradesh and published in 1981:

> In a democracy such as ours the purity and sanctity of elections, the sacrosanct and sacred nature of the electoral process must be preserved and maintained.
> (Quoted in Gilmartin 2007: 78)

He emphasises that this is not a reference to sanctity in a strictly religious sense but an appeal to the concept of a sovereign authority located outside state and society. A sacred space, founded in the free will and conscience of the individual voter, defines the presence of the people. This sacred space and the "powerful, sovereign fiction" (ibid: 77) of the people it contains, lie at the heart of India's electoral system. Gilmartin claims that the tripartite conceptual distinction between state, society and the people on which it is based, originates in eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain (ibid: 56). He also describes numerous contradictions in the application of electoral law in India (ibid: 78). These would

have been apparent to the Supreme Court itself, which issued its judgment soon after the most notorious election case in Indian history, The State of Uttar Pradesh v. Raj Narain (1975).[56] On being convicted by the Allahabad High Court for misuse of government resources in her 1971 election campaign, Indira Gandhi had proclaimed internal emergency in June 1975 and pushed through amendments to the Representation of the People Act and the Indian Constitution. The former retrospectively redefined election offences and the latter exempted the President, Vice President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Lok Sabha (lower house) from judicial jurisdiction.

But for Gilmartin these contradictions are inherent to the electoral system developed in Britain rather than the result of an unsuccessful transplantation of European ideas onto non-European soil (ibid: 57). The case of Indira Gandhi exemplifies a general difficulty in maintaining, through reference to the law, an image of the electorate "free from coercion" in elections conducted in society and overseen by the state (ibid: 77).[57] The image of the electorate is said to be a substantiation of the concept of the people which is central to the "universalist imaginings of modernity", the idea of "a community of equal human beings living in what Anderson calls homogenous empty time" (Gilmartin 2007: 55). Gilmartin argues that viewing this concept more "concretely", through the law and the vote, reveals how the tension intrinsic in the idea of the people as a fiction substantiated through the act of voting is "critical to the structuring of sovereignty" (ibid: 56). Gilmartin describes a tension that resembles a paradox and a structure riven by an internal contradiction, expressed in an image arguably no less abstract than Anderson's invocation of empty-homogenous time:

> Only by standing apart from both state and society, could the people serve as sovereign. And yet, only by making their voices heard through elections, could the people rule.

[56] "State Of U.P vs Raj Narain & Others", 24 January 1975: http://indiankanoon.org/doc/438670/ (accessed 23/09/2015)

[57] He also insists that the Supreme Court *did* manage to maintain the fiction of popular sovereignty when it heard this case on appeal. "Even as they overturned Gandhi's conviction and bowed to the realities of political power, the majority of the court struck down key portions of the Thirty-ninth Amendment as unconstitutional (or, as violative of the constitution's 'basic structure')" (Gilmartin 2007: 77).

(ibid)

Significantly, in a later work Anderson does deal with what Gilmartin describes as two concrete manifestations of the concept of the people, the law and the vote. His ideas on these topics suggest directions for thinking about this concept through the numerical and temporal properties of elections. Furthermore the relationship between the notion of popular sovereignty and practice of majoritarian democracy, between empty homogeneous time and electoral time, suggests not that one is more concrete than the other, or even that they are in contradiction, but that both are imbricated; a metaphysical concept runs through a normative framework.

In *The Spectre of Comparisons* (1998a) Anderson reiterates the importance of seriality in the modern imagining of collectivity, expressed as a distinction between two types of serialization describing different kinds of political practice. One, "figured by the newspaper", is "unbound and unenumerated", and the other, by the census, "bound and numerated" (1998a: 40). In his description of "electoralism" he consigns the practice of elections to the latter, describing the ballot as "isomorphic" with the census in its anonymity and "finite numerology" (ibid: 42). For Anderson the consequences of this for development of collective subjectivities are twofold: proportional entitlement on the basis of the total number of those entitled to vote, and a reinforcement of ethnic politics on the basis of this entitlement. This starkly numerical mode of representation is said to both harden ascriptive identities and lend them political efficacy, as a result opening them up to contestation. As "notions of popular sovereignty spread, as the state acquired a welfare-and-development mission, and as the suffrage widened", voters began to influence the categories of census enumeration (ibid: 39), which suggests these categories are not as bounded as all that, and the numbers are multivalent.

Conversely, on closer inspection homogeneous empty time seems to closely resemble what American political scientist Dennis F. Thompson has described as "the special character of election time" encouraged by the practice of simultaneous voting (2004: 51):

> In an ordinary election, each voter acts as if he or she is voting at the same time as every other voter. No voter knows how others have voted until everyone has voted. No one can change a vote in response to how others have voted. And everyone votes with at least potential access to the same information.
> (ibid: 57.)

Simultaneity is said to have a normative rationale with two different aspects. Firstly, to the extent that they take place simultaneously, elections are said to allow for the expression of the will of a "determinate majority", allowing the outcome to be seen as the result of a single decision rather than a series of decisions made by different majorities (ibid: 58). This helps create "a more coherent popular sovereign" (ibid). Secondly, by ensuring that voters make their choice with equal access to information it rests upon "the democratic value of fairness" (ibid).

The origins of this ideal would probably be Mill's "one man, one vote; one vote, one value", but there are also strong echoes of Anderson's evocation of the unbound serialities and universal consciousness produced by the daily reading of a newspaper written in a single language describing events happening all over the world. Both activities are characterized by periodicity, simultaneity and finality. As with Anderson's account of monolingual mass reading publics, most aspects of this description run contrary to actual practice in India. The 2014 Lok Sabha election was particularly long-drawn-out, leading it to be described as one of the longest elections in Indian history. The entire polling process, from announcement of the election dates on 5 March 2014 to the announcement of the election result on 16 May 2014, lasted 63 days. Polling itself took place in nine phases over 36 days, from 7 April to 12 May, and all of this was done in the interests of fairness. "The integrity of elections is paramount", former election commissioner, SY Qureshi, is quoted saying in a BBC News article on the

2014 election: “Since we've had phased elections, they have definitely become freer and fairer" (Biswas 2014).

Perceptions of police partisanship necessitated the deployment of federal forces and led to 120,000 paramilitary troops being moved about the country to secure polling stations, counting centres and electronic voting machines. This was a costly and time-consuming process, especially in large states with bad infrastructure and poor law-and-order such as UP. Whereas in Kerala and Gujarat polling occurred in a single day, in Uttar Pradesh it was carried out in six phases from 10 March to 12 May 2014. The polls swept across the state in a roughly west-east direction. This was the opposite direction to the 2009 polls and inadvertently ended up favouring the BJP. Polling began in a part of the state where the BJP had made inroads through post-riot communal polarization, and ended in the east, where there was a much-publicised contest between Modi and the Aam Aadmi Party candidate, Arvind Kejriwal in the symbolically important seat of Varanasi.

As I travelled across the state during the elections, visiting Muzaffarnagar, Lucknow and Varanasi in turn, I heard plenty of speculation about the outcome of elections in UP and other parts of India. Under the Model Code of Conduct results of exit polls could not be released prior to the 12 May, but opinion polls were not so tightly restricted, and there was sometimes an overlap between the two forms.[58] Intimations of the results also came via party workers who moved across the state to canvass in different areas after polling had finished in their own constituencies. Reports of BJP successes in the earlier phases of the election and predictions of its success in subsequent ones certainly seemed to affect the morale of workers belonging to all parties. In a first-past-the-post system, where candidates win by a simple plurality of votes, it is also likely to have affected the choices of voters. Pre-

[58] ECI Guidelines for Publication and Dissemination of Results of Opinion Polls/Exit Polls (1998): http://eci.nic.in/archive/instruction/recent/media/pnxitpoll_FINAL.html (accessed 21/09/2015)
ECI Communication dated 16 April 2014 on “Opinion Poll & Exit Poll – Distinction Between – Commission’s advise [sic] regarding”, which observes that news channels have been broadcasting opinion polls on the basis of concluded polls, and requests them to desist from this practice:
http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/current/Exit%20Poll%20&%20Opinion%20Poll%2016_4_14.pdf

election discussions conducted in party-offices, on the streets and in private homes, centered on which parties were in front, the electoral preferences of different caste and religious groups, and therefore which candidate was a good bet in that particular seat. A fug of rumour and speculation shrouded these deliberations, which created talk of a Modi 'wave' and even Modi a 'tsunami' long before results were out.

The implications of all of this might seem to be grave. However, Thompson himself acknowledges that his description of what he describes as an "ordinary election day" runs contrary to actual practice in the US (2004: 57). The drawing up of electoral districts, scheduling of polls and loose separation between elections and other periods of political activity, often violate this norm (ibid: 51). Like Anderson he is untroubled by these discrepancies; they are anomalies rather than counterevidence and result from incorrect understanding of "the special character of election time" (ibid). The main difference in the two systems therefore seems to be one of inflection rather than category. Both are founded in the ideal of a level playing field; in the US this is the starting point, in India, something yet to be achieved. Significant differences are engendered by that 'yet', notably, the pedagogic function of a body such as the ECI, but the ideal remains the same. Thompson's description of the special character of election time in the US electoral process does not seem to fundamentally differ from Gilmartin and Moog's description of the "strong cyclical, temporal structure" of Indian election administration (2012: 146). At first this seems like a reiteration of over-familiar notions about the cyclical nature of time in India (as taken apart by Thapar [1996]). But the idea of election time as distinct from "the "normal" temporal realm of everyday politics", requiring "special rules" so that "the free voice of the individual can be heard" is also familiar from democratic theory in both India and the US.

Mukulika Bannerjee, for example, expresses it in her description of "the *communitas* of election time" in India (Banerjee 2011: 88). In this essay she depicts a reverse carnival, encouraged by strict enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct, characterized by "hyper-

structure", when things are more structured and efficient than normal (ibid: 84). During this period the Code is said to be so thoroughly introjected by voters that bureaucratic intervention is no longer required to uphold it. Communitas suspends the rules of normal social order and brings about "a rare flowering of egalitarianism" (ibid: 94-95). Ultimately, the rationale behind mundane details of election procedure in both countries seems to rest upon the ideal of the 'sacred' space-time of popular sovereignty.

Gilmartin makes this explicit in a subsequent essay, when he uses Carl Schmitt's assertion that all major modern theories of the state are secularized theological concepts (Schmitt 2005: 36) as the first step in his own global history of voting, albeit acknowledging limits to its universal applicability given that it is "deeply embedded within the specific history of European Christianity" (Gilmartin 2012: 409). Whether it be the concept of kingship in premodern India, sovereignty in the Safavid and Mughal empires, or the divine right of kings in Europe, the same underlying tension between worldly politics and a divine seat of authority is said to characterize them all. This tension is said to provide the background for the modern idea of popular sovereignty.

However, the paradoxical nature of sovereign power seems to be heightened when it is vested in 'the people' rather than the person of a king, especially when indirectly expressed in the velleities of an anonymous voting process or located in impersonal institutions. In the eyes of Carl Schmitt, it transforms it utterly:

> The sovereign, who in the deistic view of the world, even if conceived as residing outside the world, had remained the engineer of the great machine, has been radically pushed aside. The machine now runs by itself. The metaphysical proposition that God enunciates only general and not particular declarations of will governed the metaphysics of Leibniz and Nicolas Malebranche. The general will of Rousseau became identical with the will of the sovereign; but simultaneously the concept of the general also contained a quantitative determination with regard to its subject, which means that the people became the sovereign. The decisionistic and personalistic element in the concept of sovereignty was thus lost.
> (2005: 48)

Again we come across this image of a 'machine' of state, mindless in its operations ("the machine now runs by itself") and unspecific in its authority ("the people"). In the face of this

'loss' the only solution is "decisionism", which in a post-monarchical age is said to be best represented by "dictatorship" (ibid: 66) – Schmitt's theories also being embedded in his active support for National Socialism. Whereas for Morgan (1983) the internal tension within this concept is something that can be discerned even in its monarchical version, and he finds remnants of the theory of the king's two bodies in the ideal separation between legislative and executive power. In this updated version of the division between the king's body politic and body mystic (Kantorowicz 1981), there is a divide "between the power to govern and the power to determine the form and limits of government" (Morgan 1989: 83). Rather than negating the concept, its extension reveals its structure and utility. In both monarchical and popular versions, a 'split sovereignty' prevents oligarchic concentration of power by impeding 'decisionism'.

In this chapter I explore the tensions inherent in this 'split', and its anarchic potential, through the awkward position of the constitutionally established and ostensibly politically independent ECI: its struggles with political parties and executive power, and to enforce its Code through functionaries that are subject to local influence. I argue that these strains result from two profane scandals, which I will now begin to outline: the absence of a single principle of community legitimizing the Indian nation-state (void), and its obverse, a multiplicity of possible identifications which sometimes result in communal politics (excess).

The scandal of democracy: void

The most immediate context for introduction of suffrage to India is the history of electoral reform in nineteenth century Britain. In this section I will look at some aspects of this history in order illuminate distinctive aspects of the electoral system as it has developed in India. The history of the suffrage in Britain and India are of course very different, but I argue that a similar dynamic can be discerned in both. That is, governmental action (extension of the

suffrage) inadvertently encouraging the intervention of supplementary subjects in a context of severe inequality. I will discuss this with reference to how the introduction of separate electorates for Hindus and Muslims influenced the creation of reserved constituencies for Scheduled Caste and Tribe candidates, which are a distinctive feature of Indian democracy.

According to Gilmartin, Britain's electoral system was not just the closest model available to India but a paradigmatic example of a non-revolutionary transition to universal suffrage, albeit one marked by "bitter conflict" (2007: 57). In nineteenth century Britain an old regime based in influence and status apparently survived and even flourished "in interaction with the operation of a reformed electoral system" (ibid). Reform is said to have been an important "mechanism" whereby "an emerging regime of legal egalitarianism and mass citizenship was reconciled with a continuing politics of inequality and influence" (ibid). The reference to a "mechanism" initially suggests something like an Althusserian understanding of the state apparatus, but the actors involved are unclear and the outcome paradoxical: an emergent "regime" of equality effects "reconciliation" with continued inequalities.

The 'mechanism' of reform described by Gilmartin therefore seems to more closely resemble Foucault's use of the term 'dispositif'. Thinking of electoral reform in both Britain and India along these lines encourages closer attention to the context in which it was introduced and its reception by highly stratified societies. In both countries a carefully restricted extension of the suffrage can be seen to have had unintended consequences. In nineteenth century Britain, the cautious nature of the 1832 Reform Act catalysed a militant reform movement, which radically transformed perceptions of politics and produced new political actors. Limiting the suffrage to property-owners and those who earned more than £10 per year excluded the mass of wage-labourers, ensuring that any movement to extend the suffrage would "divide the country on class lines" (Thompson 1984: 5). According to the historian Dorothy Thompson, the resulting assumption of an interest in politics by a

"hitherto non-political crowd" was the most alarming aspect of Chartism for conservative members of the upper-classes (ibid: 12).

There was obviously no movement exactly equivalent to the Chartists in India, but the growth of the Congress party was viewed with similar alarm by some members of the indigenous elite. In a speech delivered in Lucknow in 1887, Sayyid Ahmad Khan focused his attention on the demand of its National Conference that there should be elections to a section of the Viceroy of India's Council.

> And let us suppose first of all that we have universal suffrage, as in America, and that everybody, *chamars* [a Dalit caste] and all, have votes. And first suppose that all Mahomedan electors vote for a Mahomedan member and all Hindu electors for a Hindu member, and now count how many votes the Mahomedan member has and how many the Hindu. It is certain that the Hindu member will have four times as numerous. Therefore we can prove by mathematics that there will be four votes for the Hindu to every one vote for the Mahomedan. And now how can the Mahomedan guard his interests? It would be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one.
> (Khan 1888: 12)

Ahmad Khan's words express an age-old horror of what Rancière describes as democratic anarchy – horror that *everybody*, Chamars and all, should have the vote and decide the distribution of places. The well-to-do inevitably resist the idea that "their birth, their age, or their science has to bow before the law of chance" (Rancière 2006b: 40). But he also speaks of a second scandal; that in a context such as India communal loyalties would load the dice, making its outcome anything but arbitrary.

The colonial state responded to the push-pull of centrifugal and centripetal impulses with the Indian Councils Act of 1909, also known as the Morley-Minto reforms, which introduced elections to posts in Imperial and local legislative councils, but with distinct representative mechanisms for Muslims. Through reserved seats and separate electorates (seats in which Muslims would vote for Muslim candidates) they would be represented beyond their numerical proportion. The Liberal government elected into office in 1906 provided the main impetus for the Councils Act, just as the Whig government had been for the 1832 Act in Britain. But it did so in response to the unrest provoked by the partition of

Bengal, not least the Congress-led swadeshi (home rule) movement, and also as a result of pressure from 'ashraf' Muslims, those of 'noble' birth (Platts 2006: 57), who were uneasily watching these developments.

The historian Farzana Shaikh argues that "weightage" for ashraf Muslims was introduced in order to spare these "gentlemen of the East" the humiliation of having to seek the consent of the peasantry and the proletariat before taking part in government deliberations (1991: 159). By these means colonial officials were able to propound a view of representation as a "descriptive activity", a matter of "accurate correspondence between a representative and his constituency", and avert the possibility of "representation as a substantive, creative activity" (ibid: 138). This perceived conflict between descriptive and substantive understandings of representation falls back on the ideal of 'co-presence' between rulers and the ruled. As Iris Marion Young points out, such objections to representation on the basis of gender or ethnicity can be extended to *all* representation in mass democracy: "It is perhaps even more difficult to imagine a shared will for the residents of a metropolitan legislative district than for members of an ethnic group" (Young 2000: 126).

The main novelty then seems to have been the introduction of *non-territorial* representation. Representation in England and America may have been justified as a means for different economic and social interest groups to have a voice in government, but in practice it had always been based on geographically defined communities. Even when, in seventeenth century England, special seats had been created in the House of Commons for "gentlemen" who lacked the means or status to get a seat in the House of Lords, these were created on the basis of *locality* rather than class (Morgan 1989: 41-42). This innovation was born of an ancient concern to balance "*arithmetical* equality" against "*geometrical* harmony", with the aim of preserving stability, which in practice often exposes something "essentially uncountable" that "distorts the very principle of counting" (Laclau 2007: 244-

245, italics in the original). In response to Rancière's ideas, Laclau identifies this as "the *demos* – the 'people' – which, while being a part, also claims to be the whole" (ibid: 245).

At the time this innovation was not seen as a particularly radical one. The more militant section of the Congress party rejected the Act for falling short of the goal of independence and was particularly hostile to separate electorates, viewing them as a continuation of the divide-and-rule policy it believed had motivated the 1905 partition of Bengal. It was only much later that it was adapted by members of Depressed Class groups (now known as Dalits or Scheduled Castes) to advocate for separate electorates on a caste basis in their testimony to the Simon Commission between 1928-29 (Zelliot 1972: 84). Pouring new wine into old bottles they attempted to fill-out the colonial understanding of "descriptive" representation to allow for it to become "a substantive, creative activity", to transform a mechanism designed to protect an elite minority into a means to allow for the fuller participation of Scheduled Castes in political life.

This demand was taken up and pushed through by Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1892-1956), the Dalit leader who drafted the Constitution of India. Ambedkar had originally supported universal suffrage, but when this was rejected by the British he changed his position to promote separate electorates for members of the Depressed Class along the lines of those provided for Muslims. His stance hardened as a result of clashes with Gandhi on this issue, but his attitude to what Anderson describes as "numerical politics" remained ambivalent. In the early 1940s, Ambedkar complained of how politics in India had "become a matter of numbers" advantaging one community over another on a numerical basis and resulting in the Census being "deliberately cooked for securing political advantages which numbers give" (1943: 9). As a result, members of the Scheduled Castes, or Untouchables, as he called them, were "quartered, cooked and served" at every Decennial Census as various caste and religious groups sought to incorporate them (ibid). Although this might render the census unreliable, Ambedkar argued, it does not invalidate its findings: "one cannot be far

wrong if it was said that the present number of the Untouchables in British India is round about 60 million people" (ibid: 10).

His reasons for accepting this figure are not hard to guess – 60 million was a lot. According to census findings Scheduled Castes made up about a sixth of the then total population of British India, enough to make a difference to "electoral arithmetic" in areas such as Bengal and the Punjab where Hindus and Muslims were closely balanced (Bayly 1999: 261). This group was also a product and beneficiary of colonial processes of classification, enumeration and representation. Subordination pre-dated British rule, but it was colonial taxonomy that transformed "highly fragmented congeries of subordinated communities" into a unitary and trans-regional category, and electoral reform that gave it political clout (Mendelsohn and Vicziany 1998: 2).

Ambedkar was consistent in extending this theory of representation to Muslims and supporting the creation of Pakistan. His *Thoughts on Pakistan* (1941) describes the ideal of an integral India as incompatible with the goal of independence, and Hindus and Muslims as not merely different from one another but antagonistic and therefore unable to live together in one nation. It did not follow from this that he was happy to accept Hindu religion as a basis for nationalism in India. Hinduism was disqualified as a unifying national identity because of its association with the caste system, and also popular traditions of worship which have come to be seen as egalitarian. He argues that veneration of bhakti sants, in particular, one context for the Gandhi-cult, encouraged a personality worship that had retarded political progress in India. "The nation does not exist", Ambedkar writes, it "is to be created" (1943: 26). Adapting and transforming aspects of constitutional democracy to suit the needs of Indian society, separate electorates would be a means to reconfigure society and thereby *create* a nation. The poison of caste would be used to cure the evils of division and inequality. An institution he identified as anti-national would help counter inequalities and bring about unity. The paradoxical nature of this solution was necessitated by

contradictions inherent in the introduction of democracy to India, the "life of contradictions" he famously announced in his address to the Constituent Assembly, in which political equality would coexist with social and economic inequality.

Post-Independence, tainted by their association with the communal divisions that had led to Partition, separate electorates were abandoned by the Congress government and replaced with reserved seats for Scheduled Caste candidates, which would be elected by mixed constituencies. Fifty years after Ambedkar's death, by the time of the 2014 elections, things had come to such a pass that the Hindu nationalist BJP was able to shake off its reputation as the 'Brahmin party' and capture a state such as Uttar Pradesh, which has one of the highest proportion of Scheduled Caste voters in India, even managing to win all 17 seats reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates in UP. Meanwhile the Bahujan Samaj Party, which claims to continue Ambedkar's legacy, failed to win a single seat anywhere. This was despite winning 19.6% of the total votes in UP and coming third nationally with a vote share of 4.1%, and was interpreted by some as evidence of the BJP's shrewd manipulation of the first-past-the-post electoral system.[59]

There is, however, a precedent for smaller Dalit castes, such as Pasis, to be targeted by the BJP for support, the numerically preponderant Chamar caste being closely associated with the BSP (Narayan 2009). During conversations with Dalits in western Uttar Pradesh I also observed the coexistence of sympathy for the BSP, respect for Ambedkar, reverence for the bhakti sant Ravidas and, sometimes even, the stated intention to vote for the BJP. These attitudes and actions did not seem to be held contradictory. Dalits of all castes self-identified as Hindu, some would even describe themselves using the label 'Harijan', meaning 'child of God', a term popularised by Gandhi and now almost obsolete, having been rejected by Dalit activists for being patronising.

[59] Mallikarjunan (2014) outlines the statistics for Scheduled Caste support for the BJP in India. A description and partial rebuttal of these views on the role of first-past-the-post in the BJP victory can be found in Mukherji (2014).

These convolutions reflect the multiple, changing and conflicting principles of community, which result from the entanglements of the dispositif of suffrage, in which both the electoral mechanism and those who operate it are subject to cross-influence and transformation. They also point to what Rancière, in an interview, has described as the dual nature of the demos: its basis in both a "system of forms" designed to substantiate the power of the people (texts, institutions and institutional practices), and which have "a certain sovereignty" akin to that of a monarch or superior class (May 2008: 173). But he also speaks of the supplementary subject, who "undermines the idea of sovereignty by undermining the principle binding it to specific positions of a specific population" (ibid). The only constant being the demos, the void at the fulcrum of democracy, a dual subject which both works within and exceeds the bounds of arithmetical equality and geometrical harmony, the norms of liberal democracy and the hold of ascriptive attachments, old and new.

The scandal of democracy: excess

The very first rule of the Model Code of Conduct states that no party or candidate should engage in any activity which might encourage communal disharmony. Yet despite the fact that the 2014 election in Muzaffarnager district was openly fought on the basis of communal polarization resulting from riots that took place there the previous summer, only one instance of inflammatory speech was reported during it. Amit Shah, head of the BJP's campaign in UP, was criticized by the Election Commission for describing the election as an opportunity to exact revenge for the riots, during meetings in Muzaffarnagar, Shamli and Bijnor districts, and temporarily barred from campaigning in UP under the Model Code of Conduct.

On one reading the election could be seen as another example of the perverse effects of normative frameworks which exceed real world conditions; as a return of the primordial repressed, with electoral appeals on the basis of religion, region and caste. You could further specify this as a deficiency in Indian democracy. I would argue that something else was at work here; that such anomalies were a result of the BJP's use of the unfixity of ascriptive identities. Rather than a failure of a state-instigated process of rationalization and modernization, I view it as an effect of an attempt to regulate into existence a level playing field within a narrow view of what constitutes that field and the elements that could potentially skew it, informed by a kind of "low-flying behaviourism" (Hall 1980: 131) that besets understandings of elections and media reception alike.

A theory of action in which certain inputs (words, formulas, images) produce definite outcomes underlies Shah's own "badlaa" (revenge) comments, in which a motor response is invoked and an emotional appeal is made. Most notoriously, during an address to an audience in Shamli district on 3rd April 2014:

> The honour of Western Uttar Pradesh is in question. The time for taking revenge has now come. This is not the Mughal-era, when revenge would be taken with swords and arrows. The 2014 election is facing [us]. By pressing a button [on an electronic voting machine] you can take revenge.[60]

Wielding a sword, shooting an arrow and casting a vote are here presented as equivalent activities. (So much for deliberative democracy it would seem.) But it is significant that the age of swords and arrows is said to be over, confined to the dark Muslim past – the "Mughal-era". The electronic voting machine is proposed as an appropriately modern means for Hindus to take revenge. As well as playing upon Hindu nationalist notions of Muslims as barbaric, his provocative words also reference the principal of popular sovereignty. The Election Commission's response to his speech involved a bureaucratic

[60] From the ECI notification against Shah dated 7 April 2014, quotes from his Hindi speech translated by me. http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/current/Notice_07042014.pdf (accessed 23/09/2015). The Mughal reference seems to have been tailored for the Jat mahasabha that he was addressing; in popular histories, Jats are depicted as bravely resisting Mughal invasions.

application of deontological ethics, expressed through the ideal of a level playing field of political competition, which in its own way references this principle.

Both emerge from what Latour has described as two symmetrical myths of technology: "The myth of the Neutral Tool under complete human control and the myth of the Autonomous Destiny that no human can master" (Latour 1994: 32). A "sociological" theory of tools as neutral objects and techniques as "nothing more than pliable and diligent slaves" (ibid: 31) underlies Amit Shah's description of the voting machine/sword/arrow as interchangeable means of revenge. The means change according to the political system prevailing at the time, democracy as opposed to feudalism, but the cause and outcome sought remain the same: to avenge an outrage against female honour and therefore that of the whole community. Whereas the EC through *its* code proceeds from what Latour describes as a 'materialist' view of technology in which the mere presence of an outsized election poster can exert 'undue influence' upon a voter, and a written apology from Shah is enough to allow him to resume campaigning in UP. In this section I will begin by sketching out the way these riots were politicized, and also the background of Amit Shah whose appointment to in-charge of BJP's election organization in UP was seen as controversial at the time and was later judged to be decisive in the BJP's success in the election in UP and hence nationally.

These riots were almost without precedent in this part of rural and semi-rural Western Uttar Pradesh. Locals that I spoke to mentioned disturbances in Muzaffarnagar town during emergency-era sterilization drives, anti-Sikh violence after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, and communal tension during the 1980s and 1990s, but nothing on the scale of the riots of 2013. Up to 51,000 people were displaced over the course of them and 48 killed according to the district administration.[61] Their cause remains disputed but the most widespread accounts centre on the harassment of a young woman from one

[61] From interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma, Muzaffarnagar District Magistrate, 31 April 2014. NGOs and the ruling Samajwadi Party peg this figure much higher.

community by a youth from another. Shahnawaz, a Muslim from the village of Kawal, had reportedly been harassing Ritu, a Hindu belonging to the Jat caste, from the neighbouring village of Malikpura. A confrontation between Shahnawaz and the brother and cousin of this woman, Sachin and Gaurav, eventually resulted in the deaths of all three men. Prior to these events communal sensitivities had been heightened by talk of 'love-jihad', an alleged Muslim conspiracy to marry and convert Hindu women, which was somehow conflated with rapes that had recently taken place. The BJP and organisations associated with it were active in publicising this so-called conspiracy and protesting against these crimes.[62]

Politicians from all parties played a prominent role in circulating news of the murders in ways that led to further polarization, making incendiary speeches in large public meetings and distributing images of the killings. Sangeet Som, a BJP local member of the legislative assembly from the Western UP constituency of Sardhana, shared what purported to be a video of the murders of Sachin and Gaurav on his Facebook page. The video in fact depicted the mob killing of two brothers in Sialkot, Pakistan, in August 2010, but by the time it had been blocked by police and Som booked under the National Security Act, it had been widely viewed and continued to circulate via the mobile phone application, WhatsApp.

The administration, and by extension the ruling Samajwadi Party, was also criticised for its handling of the violence. Perceived derelictions included the transfer of the Superintendent of Police and District Magistrate at the beginning of the riots, creating an administrative vacuum; failure to prevent and control the large public meetings that triggered them, despite the fact a curfew had officially been declared; and a policy of offering compensation to the displaced on condition that they not return to their original homes. Because most of those who had fled were Muslim, this condition was particularly controversial, and it was quashed in a Supreme Court Judgement issued just before the

[62] The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a Hindu nationalist organization with close ties to the BJP, had apparently been campaigning against 'love-Jihad' in the surrounding towns and villages for a year previous to the incident. The local BJP unit had held a demonstration against police inaction in the case of a Dalit woman who had allegedly been gang raped in Shamli by four Muslim men in July 2013 (Jain 2014a).

election. Some believed these failings resulted from more than incompetence, from a compact between the BJP and SP who both stood to benefit from Hindu-Muslim polarisation. Splitting the electorate between themselves on religious lines would bring electoral dividends in a region characterised by cross-caste and religious voting patterns; specifically, the combination of Muslim and Dalit votes that had elected a Muslim BSP MP in Muzaffarnagar district.[63]

Into this charged atmosphere stepped Amit Shah, whose words of revenge and violence carried extra force because of his relationship with Narendra Modi, Chief Minister of Gujarat during the 2002 anti-Muslim pogrom in that state. Shah had preceded Modi in joining the BJP in 1986 and after many years of working closely with him in the RSS and BJP had followed him into the Gujarat government in 2002. Shah was entrusted with overseeing Modi's defence in cases relating to the 2002 massacres and 21 encounter killings (extrajudicial killings by police or armed forces) that occurred between 2003 and 2006.[64] Shah himself was arrested on 25 July 2010 for his involvement in the 2005 Sohrabbudin Sheikh fake encounter case and charged with three counts of murder. Between 2010 and 2012 he was banned from entering his home state by the Supreme Court, which feared he would use his influence to prejudice investigations into the case. The ban was only lifted when it was transferred to the state of Maharashtra. Opponents of the BJP therefore viewed Shah's appointment to head of the BJP's election campaign in Uttar Pradesh on 12 June 2013 with apprehension. Alongside the announcement that Narendra Modi would be contesting from Varanasi, it indicated that the BJP would be making a concerted effort to win the key state of Uttar Pradesh.

These efforts seem to have paid off. Within a year of his appointment, the BJP's ailing party organization had apparently been revived and its declining vote-share reversed

[63] Given the pervasiveness of these rumours it is worth noting that SP did not do much better in the 2014 polls than it had in 2009. It once again came in third place and only increased its vote share by 0.20%. (In 2009 the SP had won 14.32% of the vote, and in 2014, 14.52%) The main difference was massively increased support for the BJP, who had not even fielded a candidate in 2009 and won in 2014 with a 59% vote share to BSP's 22.78%.
[64] An Amnesty International report estimates that 31 people were killed during this period (AI 2007).

to the tune of 71 out of 80 seats, a big improvement on its performance in the 2009 polls (10 seats and fourth place). Shah's electioneering skills, notably his expertise in poll booth management, were cited as reasons for the success of the campaign, but so too was the BJP's careful use of 'social engineering', a phrase now associated with the rise of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), a party representing the interests of Scheduled Castes (Dalits) and other socio-economically disadvantaged and minority groups. The BSP had come to power in the state of Uttar Pradesh through cross-caste and religious combinations: Dalit and Muslim, Dalit and Brahmin. However, the term has also been used to describe a BJP policy dating back to the late 1990s, of widening the scope of its membership beyond its traditional upper-caste north-Indian constituency. This involved making incursions into other parts of India, electoral alliances with the BSP in UP (in 1995, 1997 and 2002 – 2003), and also inclusion of a group identified as Other Backward Class (OBC) in the 1980 Mandal Commission report on extension of caste-based reservations. This amorphous category, encompassing both the 'traditional' category of caste and the 'modern' one of class, and as much as half the population of India, would be hard for any political party with national ambitions to ignore.[65] Its genesis would seem to bear out Latour's description of groups as "the provisional product of a constant uproar made by the millions of contradictory voices about what is a group and who pertains to what" (2005b: 31).

The corollary of this theory, that those who participate in this process are also defined by it, would seem to be borne out by how the BJP's 'social engineering' policy accompanied its attempts to shake off its upper-caste image. By the 2014 Lok Sabha election the party appeared to have overcome its opposition to reservations to such an extent that it was using Modi's OBC status for electoral purposes. This was a steady undercurrent of its campaign, in which he was pointedly contrasted to the Congress Prime Ministerial candidate,

[65] See "OBC count: 52 or 41%?", *The Times of India*, 1 November 2006: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/OBc-count-52-or-41/articleshow/263918.cms (accessed 10/09/2015). The Mandal Commission Report had reported that OBCs made up 52% of the population of India. The National Sample Survey Organisation in 2006 calculated this as 41%, a lower percentage even though total numbers of OBCs had significantly increased, by 6.5%

'yuvaraj' ('young prince') Rahul Gandhi. Explicit references to Modi's caste and accusations of casteism were made on the occasion of slurring comments by politicians closely associated with the Gandhi dynasty. Namely, in response to Mani Shankar Aiyar's remark that he was only fit to serve tea at Congress party conferences, and to Priyanka Gandhi's accusation that he was engaging in "nich rajniti" ("low politics"). The success of this tactic, or at least the irritation it caused the Congress party, can be measured in its attempts to question his caste status. Modi was a fake OBC, it was claimed. He in fact belonged to a prosperous, upper-caste, business community and had abused his position as Chief Minister to shoehorn this caste into the OBC category upon assuming office.[66]

Beyond discussion of Modi's caste, overtures to OBC voters included an electoral alliance with Apna Dal (a party with an OBC following which had splintered off from the BSP) and criticism of a Congress proposal to extend reservations to religious minorities within the OBC category. This extension was announced in December 2011, in what was seen as a bid to win the Muslim vote in upcoming assembly elections, and soon became known as the Muslim quota even though it referred to religious minorities generally.[67]

BJP opposition to the quota appears to have been a case of selective outrage. Congress had also incurred the censure of the courts when it attempted to extend the OBC category to Jats just a few days before the EC announced the election dates for the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The Model Code of Conduct becomes effective as soon as election dates are released, and State and central governments are barred from announcing major plans and projects during the period it is in operation. The move had been strongly opposed by OBC activists, who viewed Jats as wealthy agriculturalists, and by those who saw it as post-riot

[66] This prompted the Gujarat government to release a two-decade old notification, proving that OBC status had been conferred on the Modi-Ghanchi caste before Modi had become elected CM: "Narendra Modi belongs to Modh-Ghanchi caste, which was added to OBCs categories in 1994, says Gujarat government" in *DNA*, 9 May 2014:
http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-narendra-modi-belongs-to-modh-ghanchi-caste-which-was-added-to-obcs-categories-in-1994-says-gujarat-government-1986389, (accessed 25/10/2014)

[67] "Minorities 4.5% sub-quota as good as dead?" in *The Times of India*, 28 May 2014:
http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Minorities-4-5-sub-quota-as-good-as-dead/articleshow/35644660.cms
(accessed 01/11/2014)

appeasement of Hindu Jats for electoral gain. However, extension of OBC status to Jats, rather than religious minorities, seems not to have been a problem for the BJP. Once in power it approved these particular reservations. When the Supreme Court reversed the decision a year later, declaring that reservations should be awarded to "new emerging groups" rather than on the basis of "historical justice", the BJP government challenged the judgment.[68]

The subquota proposal was struck down by the Andhra Pradesh High Court in June 2012 on the basis that reservations on religious grounds are unconstitutional.[69] The Congress government appealed the decision in the Supreme Court and the case was ongoing at the time of the 2014 Lok Sabha election, during which opposition to the measure formed a key part of the BJP's 'social engineering' strategy in UP. In an interview with *Caravan Magazine*, dated 1 April 2014, Amit Shah describes the anger felt by OBCs at creation of a 4.5% reservation for religious minorities within the 27% quota. "The BJP is the only party which has opposed it", he is quoted saying, "and we are naturally getting a good response from the OBC communities" (Joshi 2014); and arguably not just from the sizeable OBC community. In opposing the sub-quota the BJP was able to draw upon Hindu anger at Muslim 'appeasement' without referring to specific religious groups.

Calls for voters, implicitly Hindu, to forget their caste differences and unify in supporting the BJP also often seemed to contain an anti-Muslim subtext. This subtext was very close to the surface during elections in Western UP, where there was resentment of compensation packages for Muslim riot victims and what was perceived to have been unjust treatment of Hindus who had been implicated in the violence. Although the culprit here was the Samajwadi Party State government rather than the Congress party ruling at the centre,

[68] Information on judgment: http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/sc-quashes-decision-to-include-jats-in-obc-category-rules-caste-cant-be-sole-ground/ (accessed 02/04/2015). And on BJP opposition to it: http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/govt-seeks-review-of-scs-jat-quota-order/ (accessed 02/04/2015).

[69] Non-Hindus are included in the existing OBC lists, but on account of their caste status rather than religion. The Central list of OBCs for UP includes Muslim sub-sets of the mostly Hindu Teli and Kayastha castes.

the two parties seemed to be linked in the minds of voters. The SP had been lending external support to the Congress's coalition government since the last general election in 2009. Samajwadi Party Chairman, Mulayam Singh Yadav, may since have expressed a wish to be prime minister in a third front coalition government, independent of both Congress and the BJP, but an impression persisted that voting for SP locally would mean bringing Congress into power nationally.

Social engineering also extended to selection of individual candidates chosen on the basis of "local clout and winning potential" rather than party loyalty or ideology (Joshi 2014). Sanjeev Baliyan, the BJP candidate for Muzaffarnagar, a vet from a prominent Jat Hindu family, was new to party politics. He seemed to have been selected as an antipode to the sitting BSP MP, Kadir Rana, who belonged to a wealthy, politically well-connected Muslim family. Rana's CV included an extensive criminal record (five criminal cases, including charges for murder, attempted murder and criminal intimidation); recorded assets of: Rs 135,202,262; and political experience in both the Samajwadi Party and the Rashtriya Lok Dal prior to joining the Bahujan Samaj Party in 2009.[70] He was also reportedly an 'angutha chhap' (someone who signs his name with his thumb) although BSP workers told me that whilst functionally illiterate he was able to write his signature.

Both candidates had been involved in the riots, and this detail did not seem to be accidental. Rana had been charged for inciting violence during a speech to a gathering outside a mosque in Muzaffarnagar city after Friday prayers on 30 August 2013. Baliyan was arrested and briefly imprisoned after a mahapanchayat (great village assembly) organised by a Jat-dominated farmer's union on the theme of 'bahu, beti bachao' (save our daughters-in-law and daughters), which took place the following day. In selecting them, their parties were playing upon post-riot, communal divisions, the BJP seeking to attract Hindu voters across castes and classes, the BSP, to reassure Muslims. This appeal to primordial identities was

[70] Information from the page on Kadir Rana compiled by the Association for Democratic Reform: http://myneta.info/ls2014/candidate.php?candidate_id=226 (19/02/2014).

made possible by their very amorphousness and multiplicity. The history of categorisations such as Dalit and OBC reminds us of how the weakness of an identification can lend it political strength, how it can be all the more powerful because it lacks taxonomical precision and fails to evoke a positive sense of belonging, which does not preclude it from eventually doing so. A similar observation can of course be made about the catch-all term 'Hindu'. From what Anderson, in his criticism of diaspora identity politics, diagnoses as a lack of "universal grounding" (1998a: 45), comes its power to move and to galvanise; hence the ability of a BJP to appeal to OBCs and Dalits on the implicit basis of their 'shared' Hindu identity.

The instrumentalisation of these identities was also facilitated by what Latour has described as a 'materialist' view of technology and mediation, which encouraged blindness to less easily quantified infringements, what was said and done by candidates and their supporters in plain sight of election observers. Amit Shah's words only came to the attention of the Election Commission because of an article filed by the journalist Neha Dixit for an Indian news website (Dixit 2014). The report was picked up by national print and electronic media, and eventually reached the attention of the ECI itself, which requested that Election Officers in the relevant districts pass on video recordings of the speeches. Dixit herself confirmed that in all her time covering the elections in UP she had never seen anyone reprimanded for provocative speech; monitoring teams seemed more concerned with measuring the decibels emanating from loudspeakers than moderating the words coming out of the mouths of politicians.[71]

When I asked the District Magistrate of Muzaffarnagar, who was also its Election Officer, why he had not forwarded the videotapes to the ECI himself, he responded that he and his team "did not perceive any violation" in them.[72] Referring to the riots was not a violation in itself he told me. The "sentiment it creates in the people" and "the vote appeal it creates through caste and community bias" might be, but in assessing this "there is a very

[71] From email correspondence with Neha Dixit on 24 December 2014.
[72] Interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma, Muzaffarnagar, 3 May 2014.

thin line that we have to observe, and there comes the experience and there comes basically the judgment". This line might be hard for an outsider to judge because, in Muzaffarnagar, "the way of talking of the people, it's [a] little bit aggressive in nature". But if one looks at the context of the entire speech, at its after-effects, if it in fact contains no communal charge, as evidenced by there being no law-and-order disturbances after it has been given, then it is possible to say that there has not been any violation. This theory of communication, in which it is judged by its outcomes, absolved the election office of moderating speech. No notices for inflammatory speech were issued at the instigation of the DM's office.

Both elements (ambiguous appeals to ascriptive identity and seeming bureaucratic blindness to them) were in evidence soon after Amit Shah's visit, when news of it had begun to reach national media, during a tour conducted by the BJP candidate across rural parts of Khatauli, which had been affected by the riots and fell within the electoral boundaries of Muzaffarnagar. The riots were an open and carefully modulated feature of speeches delivered to a selection of villages. In a village with, I was told by BJP volunteers, a large 'Harijan' population, a tightly packed crowd gathered around a tree to hear Baliyan talk about the importance of "man samman" (respect), without which a man would be unable to live although he might be able to go some days without food and water. This segued into talk of the necessity for "dharm-yuddh" ("religious war"), in the context of Hindus, including some of our "Harijan" brothers, being jailed after the riots on false charges. His words closely resembled those uttered by Shah in his 'hate speech' to a Jat Mahasabha two days earlier, although the themes of honour and respect may well have had a different meaning for this audience.[73] The environment was grittier and the speech harsher in tone than that delivered in the Gujjar caste locality I had just left, where other women had been present

[73] An overlooked aspect of Shah's visit to Western UP was that in addition to addressing Jats, he had also addressed a meeting of Dalits, although I often wondered about the way ostentatious appeals to Dalit voters worked out. Talk of a split Dalit votebank (divided between BSP and BJP) and a prospective BSP-BJP coalition was a feature of rumours of Muslim disaffection with the BSP. It would also have been an efficient way to shake off the party's "Brahmin party" image, and to appeal to other non-Brahmin castes.

and there had been signs of relative prosperity (expensive farm machinery, well maintained roads and houses, healthy looking and clothed children).

I then accompanied the BJP convoy to a village with a mixed population, where SP flags were dotted about and Muslim families watched the proceedings from the back of the square and the rooftops of surrounding buildings.[74] Here there was talk of how the BJP would bring about communal harmony and peace (even a halting invocation of 'om shanti om'). Once in power it would be much more vigilant than the SP government in preventing riots from happening, the audience was assured. The District Magistrate insisted that a monitoring team had been filming and recording the speeches, but I saw no sign of this. Police were present throughout but they did not intervene until the end of a long day of campaigning when they prevented the convoy of 21 SUVs from driving into a built-up urban area after dark. The candidate and a small group of his supporters walked to a gathering in a side-street in Jansath instead. From speaking to police officers at this event and others, I got the impression that they saw their role as limited to protecting people and property.

The tour was partly a warm-up event for a rally held in Khatauli town the following day, during which the father of Gaurav, one of the Jat youths whose murder was the ostensible cause of the riots, was a guest speaker. BJP Party President, Rajnath Singh, had also been due to address the rally, but his helicopter was grounded on the way and he had to deliver his speech via a mobile phone held up to a microphone instead. Most of the audience left after it was announced that he would not be speaking in person. The District Magistrate expressed surprise and anger when I asked him whether it was the case, as I had heard stated during the rally, that the DM's office had refused permission for Singh to land

[74] Identifiable as such by clothing, but also from conversations I had with children who were milling around the square, expressing disapproval of the event and displeasure at the "kamzor" ("weak") position of the "hathi" ("elephant"), the electoral symbol of the Samajwadi Party. One small boy whom I had been chatting with recoiled when I told him my name (Sanskrit and therefore identifiable as Hindu).

his helicopter.[75] This and the Amit Shah incident made me wonder how carefully public speeches were being transcribed and monitored.

Such incidents encouraged speculation about the role of political influence in allowing obvious infringements of the Model Code of Conduct. However, immediate pressure from various political parties, the State and central government was combined with a historically derived understanding of the role of the ECI and its Code, making influence easy to intuit but hard to locate. Sensing that the BJP were likely to win in Muzaffarnagar, and being aware that a Samajwadi Party government would remain in power in UP until at least 2017, the DM's office might well have chosen the path of least resistance. But I also heard much grumbling in the Muzaffarnagar BJP office about the pedantic requirements and unsympathetic attitude of the DM. In this country there are "3 Ms", an RSS worker volunteering there informed me, the DM, the CM and the PM. The DM was subject to the influence of the other two, neither of whom were BJP. His words echoed those of former Chief Election Commissioner, T.N. Seshan's comments on the scourge of "the three Ms: Minister-Power, Muscle-Power and Money-Power" (1995: 264), both expressed unease at the discrepancy between the ideal of democracy and the messy practice of elections.

It was during Seshan's period in office that more thorough curbs on candidates' expenses and public advertising had been introduced, and his legacy seemed to live on in the election office in Muzaffarnagar's preoccupation with 'ethical' campaigning. There is "some ethics involved in democracy", the DM explained.[76] In order to do our duty to the nation and preserve "clean democracy" we should avoid "tilting towards one candidate" thereby "disfavouring" another. The effects of all of this often seemed counterproductive, given that whilst *individual* candidate's expenses are monitored and limited to Rs 5.4 million or Rs 7 million, *general* party expenses are self-reported and unrestricted. Set against this wider context there seemed something illogical in the idea that a level-playing field could be

[75] Interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma, Muzaffarnagar, 5 May 2014.
[76] Interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma 31 March 2014.

maintained through the avoidance of excessive campaign expenditure by individual candidates, and a notion of decorum in public speech focused upon balance rather than content.

Both concerns were united in the election office's media monitoring practices, which were mostly concerned with print. The DM told me that although the main focus of their attention was newspapers, they did monitor candidate's Facebook accounts and were aware of mobile phones. Two notices had been issued to candidates who had used lists of the mobile phone numbers of voters provided by private companies to send prerecorded messages.[77] Again, the emphasis was on the expense involved. The content of the messages and the way in which these phone numbers had been obtained was not a concern.

Every morning, the monitoring team would go through the local press and Muzaffarnagar editions of national papers, whilst keeping an eye on two small television screens positioned at opposite ends of the room. When they detected an article that looked like 'paid news' (party propaganda presented as a news item) they would calculate how much it cost to purchase and the amount would then be deducted from candidates' expenses. Occasionally they would do the same when they detected a 'paid' item on local television. The form they were required to fill out also contained a section on radio, but I was told that this was "pro forma". They did not bother to monitor radio because hardly anyone listened to it.[78]

The entire exercise seemed to be 'pro forma' given that Indian newspapers were carrying front-page advertisements for Narendra Modi throughout this period, to say nothing of the omnipresence of the BJP on electronic media and the internet. During the election it was rumoured to have spent 50 billion rupees on advertising alone, not far behind the $1 billion (or 60 billion rupees) the Democrats spent on the 2012 US presidential election

[77] Interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma, Muzaffarnagar, 31 March 2014.
[78] I initially thought this was a local interpretation of their responsibilities, but former Election Commissioner S.M Quraishi writes that it was introduced under his initiative (Quraishi 2014)

(Varadarajan 2014). It is indicative of the exhaustive nature of the BJP campaign that such claims seemed plausible. This response also overlooked the role of the Model Code of Conduct itself in encouraging these violations. Central and State government adverts are restricted whilst the Code is in force, the idea being that they could become propaganda for the party in power. As discussed in a previous chapter, these ads are the mainstay of the vernacular press, so restricting them ironically leaves newspapers more susceptible to the placement of 'paid news' by political parties.

After some prodding by the ECI, in January 2015 the BJP eventually declared a total election expenditure of Rs 714,28,57,813, but this self-reported and un-itemised figure was met with scepticism (Joshi 2015). Nivedita Menon points to the anomalies in an article criticising exemption of the BJP from proposed restrictions on foreign funding for NGOs: "A Hindustan Times premium front page advertisement costs Rs 3950 PER SQUARE CENTIMETER. How many advertisements like this one did you see? In how many newspapers? Over how many days?" (2014). Provoking the further question, where did the money to pay for it all come from? When I asked the DM about the role of black money in the election his understanding of it seemed to be limited to the illegal distribution of liquor, arms and cash.[79] Eighteen flying squads and 40 static surveillance teams were said to be sufficient to prevent circulation of these items. Transactions of the sort described by Menon, which are harder to track than the apocryphal chicken and moonshine used to buy votes, seemed to evade his attention as a local election officer.

During the 2014 elections the BJP can be seen to have profited from the unfixity of ascriptive identities, slippages between the local, regional and national levels of the election, and election officers' inability to span them. Locally, a circumscribed field of vision and relative unconcern with unquantifiable offences allowed the election in Muzaffarnagar to take on a communal tone, which worked to the benefit of the BJP candidate. Nationally, the

[79] Interview with Kaushal Raj Sharma, Muzaffarnagar, 31 March 2014.

Model Code can be seen to have favoured a national, non-incumbent party above the ruling Congress, and smaller and regional parties. Whilst the Model Code may not have played a direct role in the BJP victory, it arguably did form one context for the shape of its campaign, its intense focus on the figure of Modi and national-level politics at the expense of the local leaders and issues formerly considered decisive in Indian elections.

By this expedient the BJP was able to circumvent restrictions on candidate's expenses, resulting in ECI statistics that suggested Modi had spent less on his election campaign in Varanasi than the two main opposition candidates, Arvind Kejriwal (Aam Admi Party) and Ajay Rai (Congress). This calculation, derived from how much money was spent in the district during the official campaign period, overlooked the fact that it began much earlier than the given start date and was not confined to Varanasi. Modi's nomination was only confirmed on 15 March 2014, but rumours that he would stand from there were in circulation from August 2013 onwards. Modi's prominence in the BJP election campaigns also made it hard to distinguish its various layers. Was he campaigning for the BJP nationally through his public appearances? For whichever BJP candidate he was supporting in his capacity as BJP 'star campaigner'? For himself as Prime Ministerial candidate? As an MP contesting seats in both Gujarat and UP? Just as, during the emergency, underground media was able to profit from the state's circumscribed view of communication, the BJP benefited from the ECI's inability to span the spatiotemporal layers of its campaign.

Supplementary legality and democratic anarchy

Many aspects of the BJP's populist election campaign seemed to parody Rancière's theory of "democratic action" (the intervention of supplementary subjects in spaces outside those designated by executive and representative power): its opposition to dynastic rule, skirting of the informal and non-statutory rules of electoral conduct, and appeals to lower-caste

voters, women and youth. In this way, it seemed to bear out political theorist Ernesto Laclau's criticism of his assumption that "the 'people' as a historical actor will be constituted around a progressive identity" (2007: 2.46). Rather than embracing emancipatory politics, supplementary subjects may well construct their uncountability in what he describes as a 'fascist' direction. "To explore the system of alternatives", Laclau suggests, "we need a further step that Rancière has not taken so far: namely, an examination of the forms of representation to which uncountability can give rise" (ibid: 247).

I argue that Rancière anticipates this criticism in his understanding of politics as "a paradoxical form of action" (2001). This paradox lies principally in the dual nature of the demos, but it is also reflected in what he sees as the hybrid character of representative democracy, "a mixed form" founded on the privilege of elites, but "little by little" diverted from this function by democratic struggle, whose best example is said to be the movement for electoral reform in Britain (2006b: 54). Accordingly, he refuses to dismiss struggles which redefine rights and transform institutions as illusory, seeing in state structures an "effective field of battle where each camp's forces increase or diminish"; a battle not just to "take power", as in a power struggle between political parties, but "to affirm the power accrued to the people on all terrains" (May 2008). In a recent discussion with Laclau he also emphasizes that in arguing this he is not proceeding from a substantialist conception of 'the people'. For Rancière, the ""figure of the people" is the enactment of the capacity that does not belong to any particular group…but rather to the capacity of everybody, of anybody" (O'Connor 2015). This power is irreducible to a state-sanctioned representative model, precisely because it does not refer to "a mass of people united by a homogenous will" (ibid).

As already mentioned in the discussion of the dispositif of suffrage, the struggle to affirm this power is an uncertain and hazardous process (for Rancière therein lies its value). These tensions and hazards can be seen to be acute in the untidy mixture of laws, norms and politics involved in electoral law's regulation of a political process. In his monograph on the

Election Commission, Ujjwal Kumar Singh expresses its paradoxical nature in his observation that rules for electoral governance "generate 'a radical uncertainty about authority', through a certainty of procedures" (Singh 2004: 5). Begging the conjoined questions, what is the source of election law's own authority? How can it be effective? His article on the Model Code describes how it is both legitimized and rendered effective by "offering a system of supplementary legality to plug the legal vacuum that existed during election time" (2012: 150).

I would suggest this anarchic authority lies in the internally divided nature of popular sovereignty ('split sovereignty'), which both refuses the myth of 'co-presence' between rulers and ruled and emphasises the substitutability of persons. In this way it is radically set against inegalitarian understandings of politics as based in the making of distinctions. This, for example, is how Carl Schmitt describes it in his work on constitutional theory, in which he describes political democracy as incompatible with "the inability to distinguish among persons" (2008: 258). The democratic concept of equality, like all political concepts, is said to be founded upon "the quality of belonging to a *particular people*" (ibid). According to Schmitt, the "equality of everything "that bears a human face" is incapable of providing a foundation for a state, a state form, or a form of government" because it allows for no distinctive differentiations and delimitations (ibid: 257). Rancière would hardly disagree, but, not viewing democracy as a state form, in his eyes this would be its main virtue. Democracy for him means the "astounding principle" that "those who rule do it on the grounds that there is no reason why some persons should rule over the others, except the fact that there is no reason" (2009c: 276-277). Rather than being based in any metaphysical foundation, the anarchical principle of democracy is located in the "conjunction, or disjunction, of the two terms "people" and "power"" (ibid: 276).

In practice supplementary legality has been most effective when the ECI and its Code have been able to function as a means to affirm 'democratic anarchy' by upholding the

principle of anonymity (the substitutability of persons, entry of supplementary subjects) and combatting oligarchy – the 1977 election being the best example of this. The Code has legitimacy precisely because it is non-statutory and administered by an un-elected body: in principle, above and beyond both law and politics, and therefore not quite falling within the remit of a 'separation of powers' model. As this chapter has discussed, its legitimacy and efficacy has resulted less from its certainty of procedures and solidity of structure than its capacity to be a site of anti-oligarchic struggle. It is all the more effective because it does not involve lengthy legal procedures, allowing the ECI to make quick judgments and take swift action when it perceives violations of its Code.

The ECI and its Code have also been most effective when the political parties and government are fractured and/or discredited, and when it has been supported by an additional force, notably the media. Former Election Commissioner, James Michael Lyngdoh, has vividly described leading a group of journalists into relief camps in Gujarat in 2002, and how the combination of ECI officials and pressmen rendered vocal those who had been "dumbed down" by fear (2004: 184). His decision not to allow assembly elections in Gujarat "in such a traumatic setting" provoked the anger of Narendra Modi (ibid: 185), who condemned what he described as Lyngdoh's 'fatwa' against the election.[80] But it is also said to have restored faith in the electoral process amongst politicians from all parties in Kashmir, where polls were being held in the same year (Lyngdoh 2004: 205).

However, this is also not an inevitable process, the trajectory of the dispositif of electoral law being no more certain than that of suffrage. During the 2014 election a kind of 'state logic', the narrowing of permissible public forums and speech, seems to have worked independently of the government and through the instrument of an extra-state body, the ECI and its code. At other times, such as the post-internal emergency election of 1977 and

[80] '"Some journalists asked me recently, "Has James Michael Lyngdoh come from Italy?"', *Outlook*, 30 September 2002:http://www.outlookindia.com/article/some-journalists-asked-me-recently-has-james-michael-lyngdoh-come-from-italy/217399 (accessed 21/09/2015)

during the 2002 assembly elections in Gujarat, something else, something more akin to democratic action, appears to have been at work. That is, the entry of 'supplementary subjects' and also the formation of other types of affiliation: combinations between different caste and religious groups which are not based in "mutuality of being" (Sahlin 2011), to use Sahlin's rock-bottom definition of kinship, and which are also not founded upon any transcendent principle ('co-presence'), but made and re-made through this-worldly ties.

Conclusion

"Objects that are impossible but necessary always find ways of gaining access – in a distorted way, no doubt – to the field of representation."
(Laclau 2007: 247)

One of the inevitable drawbacks of the wide-ranging approach adopted by this thesis is that it has not allowed space to cover a particular topic at length. Rather than an overview of a single period or in-depth study of a particular topic, it has been organised as a series of interventions into different aspects of political communication in modern India, with a view to better understanding this general process. Because of its strong theoretical orientation, empirical material has been edited out in order to allow its overall argument to come through more clearly. I hope to return to this material and elaborate upon themes that I have touched upon here, in subsequent work.

Possible topics for further research would include: a follow-up of implementation of Urdu's status as second official language in UP; as we approach the centenaries of the conclusion of the First World War and the partitioning of the Caliphate, more research on reception of the War in India, with special focus on the 'Mohammadan press', looking at other Urdu publications, press in other languages and information networks by which news of the War came to reach India; a survey of the rich corpus of prison literature produced in colonial and postcolonial India; a genealogy of the unofficial but respected status of 'political prisoner' as a way to understand how 'the political' was defined across the colonial and postcolonial period; a comparative study of electoral reform in nineteenth century Britain and India, which would combine archival research and theoretical engagement with the questions of representation discussed here; a comparative study of the political thought of Ambedkar and Azad, which would engage with how these two figures came to espouse a 'religious' politics, in apparent refutation of their earlier stance; a study of the use of new media in the upcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, focusing on BJP attitudes

towards technology and spectacle, building upon work done on the UP elections; a study of the history of 'social engineering' in Western UP, looking at how local traditions of cross-denominational cooperation manifest in farmers unions, the Communist Party of India and the Bahujan Samaj Party were affected by the 2013 riots and the 2014 election campaign. The work done here lays the foundation for such work in terms of identifying research topics, collecting material and identifying sources with a view to collect further material.

In the thesis proper, dissatisfaction with identitarian understandings of group formation disposes me to focus on the means by which groups are mediated, rather than the boundaries that demarcate them or the contents that supposedly define them. In the first instance, to consider the status of Hindi and Urdu, languages whose conjoined histories refute assumptions about linguistic identity as a fixed marker of difference pertaining to objectively definable social groups. Scepticism about the coherence and efficacy of state and 'elite' intentions, as attested to by the mixed results of language politics and policy in north India, informs my alternative heuristics of 'techno-politics', which by allowing greater scope for human *and* non-human agency, aims to better encompass the variability and heterogeneity of socio-political group formation. The post-sovereign view of agency advanced through this concept leads me to prefer a 'dispositif' of state to Althusserian theories of the state 'apparatus'. To the complementary notion of symbolic mediation, I oppose a stronger awareness of the political potential of the open temporality of the performative, the productive nature of the slippages between a communicative act and its reception. I look in particular at how writing is able to access this potential in the past and the virtual.

Texts produced by voluble actors have been the focus of my research: acts, codes and constitutions, reports and manifestoes, newspapers and magazines, published journals. But I do not view them as discrete documents or deal solely with their textual content. I read them against the findings of archival and fieldwork research, with a view to understanding

something of their context, the means by which they were disseminated and the ways in which they were received. I also pay attention to how they were produced and relate to other media: the printed image, broadcast word and video message.

By reading along the grain, I discern the outlines of the groups which are sought to be sutured or lassoed into being by these 'paper chains'. By reading against it, I try to avoid making assumptions about the success of these attempts. I am accordingly circumspect about making statements about how these messages are received, beyond looking at moments, necessarily fleeting, when groups have been coalesced in unanticipated ways by the pedagogic efforts of states and 'elites'. I also look at the obverse aspect of this process, at how the state itself becomes legible through these efforts.

In the introductory chapter I situate my own understanding of group formation in relation to theoretical literature on nationalism, ethnicity and class, and the understandings of state construction and social cohesion, which inform them. To the instrumentalism and determinism of these theories I oppose the heuristic of techno-politics, which informs the key concepts of dispositif of state and the insurrectionary possibilities of writing. The subsequent four chapters go on to apply these insights to the examination of specific cases.

Chapter one, "The Immense writing-machine and the reading public", deals with post-Independence marginalisation of Urdu in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It takes on board ideologically motivated 'misrecognition' of the language, but describes how state policy can be undercut by the way it is interpreted, implemented and received. In practice, marginalisation of Urdu in the State where it was formerly the predominant language seems to have been achieved through collateral effects rather than direct means: in subversion of central state policy and through the medium of non-state agencies. It has also to an extent been successfully resisted by those on the receiving end of these efforts, with the result that, contrary to the prognostics of social scientists, the effects (intended or

not) of state policy, and both working through and beyond attempts to instrumentalise linguistic and religious identities, Urdu continues to remain significant in UP.

Chapter two, "Impossible speech", picks up on the preceding discussion of Urdu's ambiguous status to deal with the attempts of two editor-journalists to exceed the constraints of direct and indirect censorship, and the roles allotted to them by the current dispensation, in order to address a 'qaum' and a readership conceived in their own image. It deals with these attempts through their response to a series of comparable crises and combinations; to a cosmopolitan politics: World War One and the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks; to a cosmo-politics: the Kanpur Mosque incident of 1912 and the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgement on the Ayodhya land title case; and to political organisations that attempted to unite Hindus and Muslims: the nascent Khilafat movement, which was key to their coming together in the Independence struggle and Congress party, and Congress's ambiguous relationship with Muslims in the post-Independence period. I argue that Azad had greater room to manoeuvre despite his direct experience of colonial censorship and use of a much more cumbersome print technology. However, these two figures are not simply opposed; both men evoked reformist and revolutionary trajectories of South Asian Muslim politics. Through the heuristic of techno-politics, rather than an instrumentalist understanding of the manipulation of symbols, I also look at how they were aided and abetted in their efforts by techno-material constraints on both censorship and media production.

Chapter three, "Emergency pedagogy", deals with another pan-national and cross-denominational political movement, in which Indians from across the political spectrum came together to oppose the internal emergency of 1975-77. It extends the previous discussion of state censorship by describing how its repressive mechanisms once again worked to coalesce socio-political group across standard ideological and identity lines. The focus here is on audiences rather than the state or spokesmen. Although, in keeping with my

scepticism about sender-message-receiver models of communication, I seek to blur the distinction between these positions by dealing with figures who were both senders and receivers of messages. I look at the reception of emergency-era messages in the political underground, through the writings of imprisoned political activists, and in the wider population, through the 1977 election result. I also tentatively advance an alternative way of understanding this circuitry: emergency pedagogy. In opposition to what Chatterjee has described as "the old liberal paradigm of civic pedagogy" (2011: 145), I describe how during this period the pedagogic operations of the state taught the populations so addressed something that it itself did not know, and as a result coalesced them in ways that it did not anticipate. At the same time, the highly improbable nature of these alliances would seem to exceed the terms of a 'politics of performativity' as it has come to be widely understood. Muslims who voted for a former member of the Jana Sangh, in response to Congress government population control measures that were perceived to have targeted them, would arguably have been doing more than strategically performing a 'given' identity, or even responding to such a performance. I understand these processes with reference to a stronger notion of audience reception derived from literary theory, which is sensitive to its hazardous nature, and therefore better able to encompass these apparent anomalies.

The great populist election victory of 1977, which forms the conclusion to this chapter ("Reader voters"), segues into chapter four's consideration of "The Model Code of Conduct and the scandal of democracy". The ECI had played a significant role in encouraging Indians to vote without fear in the 1977 election and the Code was strengthened following the emergency, in order to prevent misuse of state resources by the ruling political party. I look in detail at how this legacy affected the shape of the 2014 election campaign, and more generally address the paradoxical nature of the idea of elections conducted in society and overseen by the state as free expression of the voice of 'the people'. I illustrate the contradictions in this idea with reference to the history of electoral reform in India and the

communally charged Uttar Pradesh phase of the 2014 Indian national election. In more general terms, I contest the ideal of 'authentic democracy' based in transparent communication and 'co-presence' between rulers and ruled, which informs literature on the 'sacrality' of elections. This chapter points instead to the 'scandalous' absence of any legitimizing principle of political community, and advances the internally divided nature of popular sovereignty ('split sovereignty') as an anarchic basis for democracy.

More generally, refusing both technological determinism and sociological essentialism precludes the possibility of any substantialist perspective of social and political groups, making their formation both necessary *and* impossible. Across the thesis as a whole I engage with this insight by looking at 'the people' as an impossible desideratum sought by a range of state and non-state actors. Through these cases I hope to demonstrate how, whether through texts, institutions or policy, there seems to be no unidirectional transmission of univocal symbols to homogenous audiences going on here. The circuitry is more twisted and knotted than the developmental state's model of knowledge diffusion and nation-state formation allows. The groups articulated in this way are also more volatile. Unlike the mass reading publics described by Anderson, which are characterised by repetition and synchronicity, the collectivities invoked are altogether more kaleidoscopic: constantly being remade, and in their definitive form, 'the people', perpetually out of reach.

Bibliography

Advani, L.K. 1979. *The People Betrayed*. New Delhi: Vision Books

—1978. *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann

Agamben, Giorgio. 2011. *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government (*Homo Sacer*, II, 2)*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

—2009. "What is an apparatus?" in *What is an Apparatus? And other Essays*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, pp. 1-24

—2005. *State of Exception*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Ahmad, Aijaz. 2001. "Azad's Careers: Roads Taken and not Taken" in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections on Abul Kalam Azad*. New Delhi: Manohar, pp. 122-175

Ahmed, Siraj-ud-din. 1920. *The Truth about the Khilafat*. Lahore: Khosla Bros., Electric Printing Works

Ai, Maeda. 2004. "From Communal Performance to Solitary Reading: The Rise of the Modern Japanese Reader" in *Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity*. Durham and London: Durham University Press, pp. 223-255

Althusser, Louis. 1977a. "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. London and New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 127-187

—1977b. "Freud and Lacan" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. London and New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 180-202

—1977c. “A Letter on Art in Reply to André Daspre” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. London and New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 221-227

Amanullah, Arshad. 2009. “Is Urdu Journalism in India a Lost Battle?” in Ather Farouqui (ed.) *Muslims and Media Images: News versus Views*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 262-291

Ambedkar, B.R. Ambedkar, B.R. 2002. “Conversion (Away from the Hindus)” in Valerian Rodrigues (ed.) *The Essential Writing of B.R. Ambedkar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 219-238.

—1943. *Mr Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchables*. Punjab: Bheem Patrika Publications

—1941. *Thoughts on Pakistan*. Bombay: Thacker and Company Limited

Amin, Shahid. 2006. “Representing the Musalman: Then and Now, Now and Then” in Shail Mayaram, M.S.S. Pandian and Ajay Skaria (eds.) *Muslims, Dalits and the Fabrications of History*. Oxford: Seagull Books, pp. 1-35

Amnesty International (AI). 2010. *Transparency needed over hasty executions and safety of family members must be ensured* [Public Statement] 1 February 2010, http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA13/003/2010/en (accessed 07/12/2013)

—2007. *India: A pattern of unlawful killings by the Gujarat police: Urgent need for effective investigations*

http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/011/2007/en (accessed 19/12/2014)

—1997. *Trial of Alleged killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members*,

http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA13/002/1997/en (accessed 07/12/2013)

Anand, C.L. 1944. *The Government of India Act 1935: with a critical introduction and commentaries*. Lahore: The University Book Agency.

Anderson, Benedict. 1998a. "Nationalism, Identity, and the World-in-Motion: On the Logics of Seriality" in Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (eds.) *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 117-133

—1998b. *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World.* London: Verso

—1996. "Colonial Language Policies in Indonesia and the Philippines: A Contrast in Intended Aims and Unintended Outcomes" in *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*. Laura García-Moreno and Peter C. Pfeiffer. Colombia: Canada House, pp. 17-27

—1991. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso

Anon. 2014. "India: another tryst with destiny." *The Guardian*, 18 May 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/global/2014/may/18/india-narendra-modi-election-destiny (accessed 18/12/2014)

Anon. 1978. *The Pen in Revolt: underground literature published during the emergency*. New Delhi: Press Institute of India

Arendt, Hannah. 1969. "A Special Supplement: Reflections on Violence" in *The New York Review of Books*, 27 February 1969, 12(4), http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1969/feb/27/a-special-supplement-reflections-on-violence/ (accessed 06/09/2015)

Ashraf, Ali. 2001. "Appraisal of Azad's Religio-Political Trajectory" in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections on Abul Kalam Azad*. New Delhi: Manohar, pp. 100-121

Austin, Granville. 2004. *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

—1999. *Working a Democratic Constitution: The Indian Experience*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Awasthi, Dilip. 1989. "Urdu uproar: Fracas over second official language status to Urdu in Uttar Pradesh", *India Today,* October 15, 1989, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/fracas-over-second-official-language-status-to-urdu-in-uttar-pradesh/1/324017.html (accessed 31/08/2015)

Azad, Abul Kalam. 1989. *India Wins Freedom: The Complete Version*. New Delhi: Orient Longman

Azad, Abul Kalam (ed.) 2010. *Al-Hilal*. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy

Bakhtin, M.M. 2006. "Discourse in the Novel" in Michael Holquist (ed.) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 259-422

—1986. "From Notes Made in 1970-71" in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 132-158

Banerjee, Mukulika. 2011. "Elections as Communitas", *Social Research*, 78(1), pp.75-98

—2007. "Sacred Elections", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42 (17), pp. 1556–1562

Barber, Karin. 2006. *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Bass, Gary. 2013. *The Blood Telegram: India's Secret War in East Pakistan*. Noida: Random House India

Basu, Durga. 2010. *Law of the Press*. Gurgaon: LexisNexis Butterworths

Baxter, Craig. 1997. *Bangladesh: From a Nation to a State*. Oxford: Westview Press

Bayly, C.A. 2012. *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Colonialism and Empire*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press

—2007. *Empire and Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780-1870*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press

—2004. *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

—2001. *The Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

—1996. "Colonial Rule and the 'Informational Order' in South Asia" in Nigel Crook (ed.) *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia: Essays on Education, Religion, History and Politics*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 280-315

—1975. *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920*. London: Oxford University Press

Bayly, Susan. 1999. *Caste, Society and Politics in India: From the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Benson, Richard. 2008. *The Printed Picture*. New York: Museum of Modern Art

Bertrand, Romain., Jean-Louis Briquet and Peter Pels (eds). 2007. *Cultures of Voting: The Hidden History of the Secret Ballot*. London: C. Hurst & Co

Bhabha, Homi K. 2004. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge

—1996. "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism" in Laura García-Moreno and Peter C. Pfeiffer (eds.) *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*. Colombia: Canada House, pp. 191-207

Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS). 2005. *Party Documents – 1952-1980: Vol 1. "Policies and Manifestoes".* New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). 2014. *Election Manifesto*,

http://www.bjp.org/images/pdf_2014/full_manifesto_english_07.04.2014.pdf (accessed 30/08/2015)

—2005. *Party Documents 1980-2005*, Vol-1: Election Manifestoes. New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party

Bhattacharya, France. 2000. "East Bengal: Between Islam and a Regional Identity" in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *A History of Pakistan and Its Origins*. London: Anthem Press, pp.39-60

Bin Sayeed, Khalid. 1954. "Federalism and Pakistan", *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 9 (Sep. 1954), pp. 139-143

Biswas, Soutik. 2014. "Why does India's election take so long?", *BBC News*, 2 May 2014,

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-27233843 (accessed 18/12/2014)

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2000. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

—1994. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press

—1987a. "Legitimation and Structured Interests in Weber's Sociology of Religion" in Scott Lash and Sam Whimster (eds.) *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*. London: Allen Unwin, pp. 119-36

—1987b. "What Makes a Social Class? On The Theoretical and Practical Existence Of Groups", *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32 (1987), pp. 1-17

—1984. Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Bourdieu, Pierre. Franz Schultheis and Andreas Pfeufter. 2013. "With Weber Against Weber: In Conversation with Pierre Bourdieu" in Simon Susen and Bryon Turner (eds.) *The Legacy of Pierre Bourdieu: Critical Essays*. London: Anthem Press, pp. 111-124

Bourdieu, Pierre. Loic J.D. Wacquant and Samar Farage. 1994. "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field", *Sociological Theory*, 12(1), pp. 1-18

Brass, Paul. 2004. ""Elite interests, popular passions, and social power in the language politics of India", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27(3), pp. 353-375

—2000. "Foucault Steals Political Science", *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol.3, pp.305-30

—1991. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*. New Delhi: Sage

—1989. "Pluralism, Regionalism and Decentralising Tendencies in Contemporary Indian Politics" in A. Jeyaratnam Wilson and Dennis Dalton (eds.), *The States of South Asia: Problems of National Integration*. London: Hurst and Company, pp. 223-264

—1988. “The Punjab Crisis and the Unity of India” in Atul Kohli (ed.), *India’s Democracy: An Analysis of Changing State Society Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.169-213

—1974. *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. London: Cambridge University Press

Brubaker, Rogers and Cooper, Frederick. 2000 “Beyond "Identity"”, *Theory and Society*, 29(1), pp.1-47

Buessow, Johann. 2014. “Re-imagining Islam in the period of the first modern globalization: Muhammad ‘Abduh and his *Theology of Unity*” in Liat Kozma, Cyrus Schayegh and Avner Wishnitzer (eds.) *A Global Middle East: Mobility, Materiality and Culture in the Modern Age, 1880-1940*. London and New York: I.B. Taurus, pp. 273-320

Burghart, Richard. 1996. “A Quarrel in the Language Family: Agency and Representations of Speech in Mithila” in *The Conditions of Listening: Essays on Religion, History and Politics in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 362-409

Burney, Aziz. 2010. *RSS ki sazish 26/11*? Noida: Burney Publishing House

—2005. *Gujarat 2002, the turning point of Indian history: India lose freedom*. (sic) New Delhi: Indian Publishers' Distributors

Butler, Judith. 1997. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. New York and London: Routledge

Callon, Michel. 1986. “The Sociology of an Actor-Network: The Case of the Electric Vehicle.” in Michel Callon, John Law and Arie Rip (eds.) *Mapping the Dynamics of Science and Technology: Sociology of Science in the Real World*. London: Macmillan Press, pp. 19-34

Carter, Thomas Francis. 1925. *The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward*. New York: Columbia University Press

Centre for Policy Analysis (CPA). 2013. *Muzaffarnagar 2013: Violence by Political Design*, http://cpadelhi.org/papersreports.htm (accessed 19/12/2014)

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2002. “Universalism and Belonging in the Logic of Capital” in Carol A Breckenridge, Sheldon Pollock, Homi K Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 82-110

—1992. “Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian" Pasts?”, *Representations*, No. 37, Special Issue: Imperial Fantasies and Postcolonial Histories (Winter, 1992), pp. 1-26

Chatterjee, Partha. 2011. “The People in Utopian and Real Time” in *Lineages of Political Society*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 129-153

—2004. *The Politics of the Governed: Reflection on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. New Delhi: Permanent Black

—1993. *The Nation and its Fragments* in *The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus*. 2006. New Delhi: OUP

—1986. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* in *The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus*. 2006. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Chhuttani, P.N. (ed.) 1995. *Politicisation of Health: J.P's Documented Medical Profile*. Chandigarh: Tilok Tirath Vidyavati Chuttani Charitable Trust.

Cohn, Bernard S. 1987. "The Census, Social Structure and Objectification in South Asia" in *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 224-254

—1966. "Regions Subjective and Objective: Their Relation to the Study of Modern Indian History and Society" in Robert I. Crane (ed.) *Regions and Regionalism in South Asian Studies: An Exploratory Study.* n.d.: Duke University, pp. 5-37

Coles, Kimberly A. 2004. "Election Day: The Construction of Democracy through Technique", *Cultural Anthropology*, 19(4), pp. 551-580

Dalmia, Vasudha. 1999. *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Darnton, Robert. 1995. "Censorship, a Comparative View: France, 1789-East Germany, 1989", *Representations*. No. 49, Special Issue: Identifying Histories: Eastern Europe Before and After 1989 (Winter, 1995), pp. 40-60

Das Gupta, Jyotirindra. 1978. "A Season of Caesars: Emergency Regimes and Development Politics in Asia", *Asian Survey*, 18(4), pp. 315-349

—1970. *Language conflict and national development: Group politics and national language policy in India*. University of California Press

Das, Veena. 2007. *Life and words: violence and the descent into the ordinary*. Berkeley and

Los Angeles: University of California Press

—2004. “The Signature of the State” in Veena Das and Deborah Poole (eds.) *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 225-252

—1995. *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Das, Veena and Deborah Poole (eds.) 2004. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Datta, V.N. 1990. *Maulana Azad*. New Delhi: Manohar Publications

Deleuze, Gilles. 1992. “What is a *dispositif*?” in Timothy J. Armstrong (ed.) *Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays translated from the French and German*. New York: Routledge, pp. 159-168

Derrida, Jacques. 2002a. *Of Grammatology*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers

—2002b. “Typewriter Ribbon: Limited Ink (2)” in *Without Alibi*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 71-160

—2000. *Dissemination*. London: The Athlone Press

Deutsch, Karl. W. 1966. *Nationalism and Social Communication: An enquiry into the foundations of nationality.* Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England

—1963. *The Nerves of Government: Models of Political Communication and Control*. London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd.

Devashayam, M.G. 2006. *JP in Jail: An Uncensored Account*. New Delhi: Roli Books

Disch, Lisa. 2008. “Representation as ‘Spokespersonship’: Bruno Latour’s Political Theory”, *Parallax*, 14(3), pp. 88-100

Dixit, Neha. 2014. “This election is a fight for honour and revenge, Amit Shah tells Jat audience in riot areas”, *Scroll*, 4 April 2014,
http://scroll.in/article/660535/This-election-is-a-fight-for-honour-and-revenge,-Amit-Shah-tells-Jat-audience-in-riot-areas (accessed 5/1/2015)

Douglas, Ian Henderson. 1988. *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Eatwell, Roger. 1996. “On defining the ‘Fascist Minimum’: The centrality of ideology”, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 1(3), pp. 303-319

Election Commission of India (ECI). 1965. *Report on the Third General Elections in India*. New Delhi: ECI

Farouqui, Ather (ed.) 2006. *Redefining Urdu Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Ferguson, James and Akhil Gupta. 1997. “Discipline and Practice: “The Field” as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology” in *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.1-46

Fish, Stanley. 2011. “Is Voting Speech?” *New York Times*, 20 June 2011, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/20/is-voting-speech/ (accessed 23/12/2014)

Forsyth, Murray. 1981. *Unions of States: The Theory and Practice of Confederation*. New York: Leicester University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1994. "Le jeu de Michel Foucault" (1977 interview) in *Dits et écrits 1954-1988, Vol. III: 1976-1979*. Paris: Gallimard. pp. 298-329

—1980. "The Confession of the Flesh." (1977 interview) in Colin Gordon (ed.) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. Essex: Harvester Press, pp. 194-228

—1978. *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*. New York: Pantheon Books

—1976. *Histoire de la sexualité: La volonté de savoir*. Paris: Gallimard

Frankel, Francine R. 2005. *India's Political Economy: 1947-2004*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Freeden, Michael. 2013. "Liberalism" in Gerald Gauss and Fred D'Agostino (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Social and Political Philosophy*. Oxford: Routledge, pp. 231-242

—1983. "Eugenics and Ideology" in *The Historical Journal*, 26(4), pp. 959-962

—1979. "Eugenics and Progressive Thought: A Study in Ideological Affinity", Michael Freeden, *The Historical Journal*, 22(3), pp. 645-671

Fuller and Veronique Bénéï (eds.) 2000. *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India*. New Delhi: Social Science Press

Fuller, C. J. and John Harriss. 2000. “For an anthropology of the modern Indian state” in C.J. Fuller and Veronique Bénéï (eds.) *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India*. New Delhi: Social Science Press, pp. 1-30

Garrigou, Alain. 2012. *Les secrets de l’isoloir*. Lormont: Le Bord de l’eau

—2002. *Histoire sociale du suffrage universel en France : 1848-2000*. Paris: Seuil

Geertz, Clifford. 1963. “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States” in Clifford Geertz (ed.) *Old Societies and New States*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, pp. 105-157

Gellner, Ernest. 1997. *Nationalism*. London: Phoenix

Gilmartin, David. 2012. “Towards a Global History of Voting: Sovereignty, the Diffusion of Ideas, and the Enchanted Individual”, *Religions*, 3, pp. 407–423

—2009. “One day's sultan: T.N. Seshan and Indian democracy”, *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 43(247), pp. 247-284

—2007. “Election Law and the ‘People’ in Colonial and Postcolonial India” in Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rochona Mazumdar and Andrew Sartori (eds.) *From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition*. Oxford University Press: New Delhi, pp. 55-82

Gilmartin, David and Robert Moog. 2012. “Introduction to “Election Law in India””, *Election Law*, 11(2), pp. 136-148

Goody, Jack. 2000. “Technologies of the Intellect: Writing and the Written Word” in *The Power of the Written Tradition*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, pp.

132-151

—1975. *Literacy in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Graham, G.F.I. 1974. *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press

—1973. "Evolution and communication: the domestication of the savage mind", *British Journal of Sociology*, 24

Goody, Jack and Ian Watt. 1963. "The Consequences of Literacy", *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 5(3), pp. 304-345

Government of India (GI). 2011. *Press in India: 2009-10: 54th Annual Report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India*

—1990. *Report on the Implementation of Gujral Committee Recommendations*

—1982. *Report of the Second Press Commission*, in two volumes

—1978. *Interim and final reports of the Shah Commission of Inquiry,* in three volumes

—1977. *White paper on misuse of mass media during the internal emergency*

—1975. *Report of the Committee for the Promotion of Urdu*

—1955. *Report of the States Reorganisation Commission*

—1954. *Report of the Press Commission*, in two volumes

Government of Punjab (GP). 1874. *A Manual for the Guidance of Officers of the Prison Department in the Panjab and its Dependencies prepared by order of the Panjab Government and Issued Under the Authority of Section 54 of Act XXVI of 1870*. Lahore: Central Jail Press

Government of Uttar Pradesh (GUP). 1962. *Report of the Uttar Pradesh Language Committee*

Graham, William. A. 1987. *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Grosz, Elizabeth. 2004. *The Nick of Time*. Durham and London: Duke University Press

Gupta, Akhil. 2012. *Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence and Poverty in India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press

—1995. "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State", *American Ethnologist*, 22(2), pp. 375-402

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1997. "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference" in *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 31-51

Gupta, Partha Sarathi. 2001. *Power, Politics and the People: Studies in British Imperialism and Indian Nationalism*. New Delhi: Permanent Black.

Hall, Stuart. 1980. "Encoding/decoding" in *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79*. London: Hutchinson (in association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham), pp. 128-138

—1973. "The 'Structured Communication' of Events", *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stenciled Occasional Papers Series*, 5:

http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/history/cccs/stencilled-occasional-papers/1to8and11to24and38to48/SOP05.pdf (accessed 22/09/2015)

—1972. "External Influences on Broadcasting – 'The External-Internal Dialectic in Broadcasting: Television's Double-Bind'", *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stenciled Occasional Papers Series*, 4: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/history/cccs/stencilled-occasional-papers/1to8and11to24and38to48/SOP04.pdf (accessed 22/09/2015)

Hannerz, Ulf. 1998. "Other Transnationals: Perspectives Gained from Studying Sideways", *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, 44, pp. 109-123

Harrison, Selig S. 1960. *India: the Most Dangerous Decades*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press

Hartung, Jan-Peter. 2013a. *A System of Life: Mawdūdī and the Ideologisation of Islam*. London: Hurst & Company

—2013b. "Who Speaks of What Caliphate? The Indian *Khilafat* Movement and its Aftermath" in Madawi Al-Rasheed, Carool Kersten, Marat Shterin (eds.) *Demystifying the Caliphate*. London: Hurst & Co., pp. 81-94

Haugen, Einar Ingvald. 1972. *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Hauser, Walter and Wendy Singer. 1986. "The Democratic Rite: Celebration and Participation in the Indian Elections", *Asian Survey*, 26(9), pp. 941-958

Herzfeld, Michael. 1992. *The Social Production of Indifference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Hobart, Mark. 2013. "When is Indonesia?" in *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 41, pp.510-529

—2005. “The profanity of the media” in E. Rothenbuhler & M. Coman (eds.), *Media anthropology.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 26-36

—1999. “The end of the world news: television and a problem of articulation in Bali” full version, with theoretical afterword, provided by author. Shorter published version in *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 3(1), pp. 79-102

Hobsbawm, E.J. 2000. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hourani, Albert. 1995. *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Iqbal, Muhammad. 1977. *Speeches, writings and statements of Iqbal*. Ed Latif Ahmed Sherwani. Lahore: Iqbal Academy.

Iser, Wolfgang. 1980. “Interaction between Text and Reader” in Suleiman, Susan R. and Inge Crosman (eds.) *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 106-119

Israel, Milton. 1994. *Communications and power: Propaganda and the press in the Indian nationalist struggle, 1920-1947*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press

Jackson, Robert. 1975. *South Asian Crisis: India-Pakistan-Bangladesh*. London: Chatto & Windus for The International Institute for Strategic Studies

Jaffrelot, Christopher. 2001. “The Sangh Parivar: Between Sanskritization and Social

Engineering." In: Hansen, Thomas Blom and Christophe Jaffrelot (eds.) *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp.72-100

—2000. "Islamic Identity and Ethnic Tensions" in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.) *A History of Pakistan and Its Origins*. London: Anthem Press, pp. 9-38

Jain, Sreenivasan. 2014a. "The Muzaffarnagar Model." *NDTV*, 4 September 2014, http://www.ndtv.com/article/opinion/the-muzaffarnagar-model-586892 (accessed 05/01/2015)

—2014b. "Muzaffarnagar: The 'riot' men for the job." *NDTV*, 3 April 2014, http://www.ndtv.com/elections/article/election-2014/muzaffarnagar-the-riot-men-for-the-job-503779 (accessed 05/01/2015)

Jalal, Ayesha. 1995. *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A comparative and historical perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Jeffrey, Robin. 2000. *India's Newspaper Revolution: Capitalism, Politics and the Indian-language Press*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

—1997. "Urdu newspapers in India: Waiting for Citizen Cane?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 32(13), pp. 631-636

Joshi, Poornima. 2015. "The ₹714-cr question: who funds BJP?" *The Hindu*, 4 February 2014, http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/politics/the-714cr-question-who-funds-bjp/article6857369.ece (accessed 27/2/14)

—2014. "The Organiser: Amit Shah takes charge", *Caravan Magazine*, 1 April 2014, http://www.caravanmagazine.in/reportage/organiser#sthash.x0TDvKsF.dpuf (accessed 21/08/2015)

Kalhan, Anil. 2010. "Constitution and 'extraconstitution': colonial regimes in postcolonial India and Pakistan" in Victor V. Ramraj and Arun K. Thiruvengadam (eds.) *Emergency Powers in Asia: Exploring the Limits of Legality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 89-120

Kantorowicz, Ernst H. 1981. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press

Kashfi, Syed M. Abul Khair. (ed.) 2008. *Noori Nastaliq Revolution in Urdu Compositing*. Karachi: Elite Publishers

Kaviraj, Sudipta. 1997. "The Modern State in India" in Martin Doornbos and Sudipta Kaviraj (eds.) *Dynamics of State Formation: India and Europe Compared*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. pp. 225-250

—1992. "Writing, Speaking, Being: Language and the Historical Formation of Identities in India" in Dagmar Hellmann-Rajanayagam and Dietmar Rothermund (eds.) *Nationalstaat und sprachkonflikte in süd und südostasien*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, pp. 25-68

Khan, Sir Syed Ahmed. 1888. *On the Present State of Indian Politics*. Allahabad: Pioneer Press

—1872. *Review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans: Are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* Benares: Medical Hall Press

King, Christopher R. 1994. *One Language, Two Scripts: The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth Century North India.* Bombay: Oxford University Press

Kittler, Friedrich. 1999. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Kleinman, Arthur., Veena Das and Margaret M. Lock (eds.) 1997. *Social Suffering*. London: University of California Press.

Kohli, Atul (ed.) 2002. *The Success of India's Democracy*. New Delhi: Cambridge University

Press

Kohli-Khandekar, Vanita. 2010. *The Indian Media Business*. New Delhi: Sage

Köpping, Klaus Peter. 2002. *Shattering Frames: Transgressions and Transformations in Anthropological Discourse and Practice*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag

Krauss, Rosalind E. 1985. "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism" in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, pp. 87-118

Kumar, Pramod. 2011. "Burney apologises for his vicious canard against RSS Will Digvijay follow suit or face trial?", *The Organiser*, 13 February 2011, http://organiser.org/archives/historic/dynamic/modules4df7.html?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=384&page=8 (accessed 23/09/2015)

Laclau, Ernesto. 2007. *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso

—1990. "The Impossibility of Society" in *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. London: Verso , pp. 89-92

—1979. *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism-Fascism-Populism*. London: Verso

Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. 2014. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso

Laitin, David. 1992. *Language repertoires and state construction in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Lambert, Richard D. 1959. “Factors in Bengali Regionalism in Pakistan”, *Far Eastern Survey*, 28(4), pp. 49-58

Latham, Kevin. 2000. “Nothing but the Truth: News Media, Power and Hegemony in South China”, *The China Quarterly*, No. 16, pp. 633-654

Latour, Bruno. 2014. “Technical does not mean material: Comment on Lemmonier, Pierre. 2012. *Mundane Objects: Materiality and non-verbal communication*”, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4(1), pp. 507-510

—2005a. “From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik: or How to Make Things Public” in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.) *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*. Karlsruhe and Massachusetts: ZKM and MIT Press, pp. 14-39

—2005b. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

—2003. “What if we *Talked* Politics a Little?”, *Contemporary Political Theory*, 2003, 2, pp. 143-164

—1994. “On Technical Mediation – Philosophy, Sociology, Genealogy”, *Common Knowledge*, 3(2), pp. 29-64

—1991a. “The Berlin key or how to do words with things” in Paul Graves-Brown (ed.) *Matter, Materiality and Modern Culture*. Routledge: London, pp. 10-21

—1991b. “Technology is Society Made Durable.” in John Law (ed.) *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology and Domination*. London: Routledge, pp. 103-132

—1988. *The Pasteurization of France*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

Latour, Bruno and Steve Woolgar. 1986. *Laboratory Life: the Construction of Social Facts*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press

Lavan, Spencer. 1973. “The Kanpur Mosque Incident of 1913: The North Indian Muslim Press and Its Reaction to Community Crisis”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 42(2), pp. 263-279

Law, John (ed.) 1986. *Power, Action and Belief: a New Sociology of Knowledge?* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Lelyveld, David. 1993. “The Fate of Hindustani: Colonial Knowledge and the Project of a National Language” in Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (eds.), *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 189 – 214

Lemmonier, Pierre. 2012. *Mundane Objects: Materiality and non-verbal communication*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press

Lifschultz, Lawrence and Kai Bird. 1979. “Bangladesh: Autonomy of a Coup”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 14, No. 49, pp. 1999-2014

Liu, Lydia H (ed.) 1999. *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations*. Durham & London: Duke University Press

—1995. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900-1937*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Lyngdoh, James Michael. 2004. *Chronicle of an Impossible Election: The Election Commission and the 2002 Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections*. New Delhi: Viking

Madani, Maulana Hussain Ahmad. 2005. *Composite Nationalism and Islam*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors

Malihabadi, Abdur. 2008. *Azad Ki Kahani Khud Azad Ki Zubani*. New Delhi: Ateqad Publishing House

Mallikarjunan, Prabhu. 2014. "*What have the reserved constituencies voted for?*", *india together*, 21 July 2014,

http://indiatogether.org/bjp-sweep-in-scheduled-caste-and-tribes-reserved-constituencies-2014-government

(accessed 22/12/2014)

Marx, Karl. 2011. "The Government of India" in Iqbal Husain (ed.) *Karl Marx on India*. New Delhi: Tulika Books, pp. 30-36

—1973. *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin Books

May, Todd., Benjamin Noys and Saul Newman. 2008. "Democracy, Anarchism and Radical Politics Today: An Interview with Jacques Rancière", *Anarchist Studies*, 16(2), pp. 173-185

McLuhan, Marshall. 2003. *Understanding Media: The extensions of man*. London: Routledge

Mead, George H. 1967. *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press

Mendelsohn, Oliver and Marika Vicziany. 1998. *The Untouchables: subordination, poverty and the state in modern India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University

Menon, Nivedita. 2014. “When Are Foreign Funds Okay? A Guide for the Perplexed”, *Kafila*, 13 June 2014,

http://kafila.org/2014/06/13/when-are-foreign-funds-okay-a-guide-for-the-perplexed/ (accessed 22/2/2014)

Menon, V.P. 1979. *The Transfer of Power in India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited

Metcalf, Barbara D. 2005. “Introduction” in Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani. 2005. *Composite Nationalism and Islam*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, pp. 23-54

Mignolo, Walter D. 1998. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press

Miller, Peter., Colin Gordon and Graham Burchell (eds.) 1991. *The Foucault effect: studies in governmentality.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Minault, Gail. 2001. “The Elusive Maulana: Reflections on Writing Azad’s Biography” in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections on Abul Kalam Azad*. New Delhi: Manohar, pp. 17-27

—1982. *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*. New York: Columbia University Press

Mitchell, Timothy. 2011. *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. London: Verso

—2002. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*. London: University of California Press

—2000. “The Stage of Modernity” in *Questions of Modernity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 1-34

—1991. “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics”, *The American Political Science Review*, 85(1), pp. 77-96

—1988. *Colonizing Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Morgan, Edmund S. 1989. *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company

Mukherji, Nirmalangshu. 2014. “A Stolen Verdict”, *Kafila*, 23 May 2014, http://kafila.org/2014/05/23/a-stolen-verdict-nirmalangshu-mukherji/ (accessed 27/2/2014)

Naim, C.M. 2010. “Syed Ahmad and His Two Books Called Asar-al-Sanadid”, *Modern Asian Studies*, 45(3), pp. 669-708

Nancy, Jean-Luc. 2011. “Finite and Infinite Democracy” in G. Agamben, A. Badiou, D. Bensaïd, W. Brown, J-L Nancy, K. Ross, J. Rancière and S. Žižek. *Democracy in What State?* Columbia University Press: New York, pp. 58-75

Narayan, Badri. 2009. *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron Politics and Dalit Mobilization*. New Delhi: Sage

Narayan, Jayaprakash. 1977a. *J.P.'s Jail Life (A collection of Personal Letters)*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann.

—1977b. *Prison Diary*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan

—1970. *Nation Building in India*. Varanasi: Navachetna Prakashan.

—1959. *Inside Lahore Fort*. Madras: Commercial Printing and Publishing House

National Commission for Minorities (NCM). 2013. *Report on NCM's Visit to Muzaffarnagar (19th September, 2013)*,

http://ncm.nic.in/pdf/tour%20reports/Shri%20wajahat/NCM%27s%20visit%20to.pdf (accessed 19/12/2014)

Nayar, Kuldip. 1977. *The Judgement: Inside Story of the Emergency in India*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House

Nehru, Jawaharlal. 1959. *The Discovery of India*. New York: Anchor Books

Nightingale, Virginia. 1996. *Studying Audiences*. London and New York: Routledge

Ninan, Sevanti. 2007. *Headlines from the Heartland: Reinventing the Hindi Public Sphere*. New Delhi: Sage

O'Connor, Kieran. 2015. ""Don't they represent us?": A discussion between Jacques Rancière and Ernesto Laclau, *Verso Blog*, 26 May 2015,

http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2008-don-t-they-represent-us-a-discussion-between-jacques-Rancière-and-ernesto-laclau (accessed 21/08/2015)

Ong, Walter J. 1982. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London and New York: Methuen

Oren, Stephen. 1976. "After the Bangladesh Coups", *The World Today*, 32(1), pp.18-24

Page, David and William Crawley. 2001. *Satellites Over South Asia: Broadcasting, Culture and Public Interest*. Sage: New Delhi/Thousand Oaks/London

Pernau, Margrit. 2010. “Shifting Globalities – Changing Headgear: The Indian Muslims between Turban, Hat and Fez” in Ulrike Freitag and Achim von Oppen (eds.) *Translocality: The Study of Globalising Processes from a Southern Perspective*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, pp. 249-267

Pinney, Christopher. 2010. “Camerawork as technical practice in colonial India” in Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (eds.) *Material Powers: Cultural studies, history and the material turn*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 145-170

—2009. “Iatrogenic Religion and Politics” in Raminder Kaur and William Mazzarella (eds.) *Censorship in South Asia: Cultural Regulation from Sedition to Seduction*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, pp. 29-62

—2008. *The Coming of Photography in India*. London: The British Library

—2004. *‘Photos of the Gods’: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India*. London: Reaktion Books

Plato. 2005. *Phaedrus*. London: Penguin Books

Platts, John T. 2006. *A Dictionary of Urdū, Classical Hindī and English*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors

Pollock, Sheldon. 2007. “Literary Culture and Manuscript Culture in Precolonial India” in Simon Eliot, Andrew Nash and Ian Willison (eds.) *Literary Cultures and the Material Book*, London: British Library, pp. 77-94

—2006. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. New Delhi: Permanent Black

—2002. “Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History” in Sheldon Pollock, Homi K Bhabha, Carol

A. Breckenridge and Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 15-53

—1998. "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 57(1), pp. 6-37

Proctor, Robert N. 2008. "Agnotology: A Missing Term to Describe the Cultural Production of Ignorance (and Its Study)" in Robert N. Proctor and Londa Schiebinger (eds.) *Agnotology: The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 1-36

Puri, Balraj. 2005. *JP on Jammu and Kashmir*, New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

Quraishi, S.Y. 2014. *An Undocumented Wonder: The Making of the Great Indian Election*. New Delhi: Rupa Publications

Rajagopal, Arvind. 2001. *Politics after Television: Hindu Nationalism and the Reshaping of the Public in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Rajashekara, H.M. 1997. "The Nature of Indian Federalism: A Critique", *Asian Survey*, 37(3), pp. 245-253

Raman, Bhavani. 2012. *Document Raj: Writing and Scribes in Early Colonial South India*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press

Ramaswamy, Sumathi. 2009. "Sanskrit for the Nation" in Asha Sarangi (ed.) *Language and Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 93-138

Ramraj, Victor V. 2010. "The emergency powers paradox" in Victor V. Ramraj and Arun K.

Thiruvengadam (eds.) *Emergency Powers in Asia: Exploring the Limits of Legality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 21-55

Rancière, Jacques. 2012. "L'élection, ce n'est pas la démocratie", *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 28 May 2012, http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/tranches-de-campagne/20120418.OBS6504/jacques-Rancière-l-election-ce-n-est-pas-la-democratie.html (accessed 18/01/2015)

—2011a. "Against an Ebbing Tide: An Interview with Jacques Rancière" in Paul Bowman and Richard Stamp (eds.) *Reading Rancière*. London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, pp. 238-251

—2011b. *Mute Speech: Literature, Critical Theory, and Politics*. New York: Columbia

—2011c. *The Politics of Aesthetics*. London: Continuum

University Press

—2010a. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. London: Continuum

—2010b. "Racism: A Passion from Above", *Monthly Review*, 23 September 2010, http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2010/Rancière230910.html (accessed 18/01/2015)

—2009a. "Contemporary Art and the Politics of Aesthetics" in Beth Hinderliter, William Kaizen, Vered Maimon, Jaleh Mansoor and Seth McCormick (eds.) *Communities of Sense: Rethinking Aesthetics and Politics*, pp. 31-50

—2009b. *The Emancipated Spectator*. London: Verso

—2009c. "Should Democracy Come? Ethics and Politics in Derrida" in Pheang Cheah and Suzanne Guerlac (eds.) *Derrida and the time of the political*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 274-288

—2006a. "Democracy, Republic, Representation", *Constellations*. 13(3), Sept. 2006, pp. 297-307

—2006b. *Hatred of Democracy*. London: Verso

—2006c. “Thinking between disciplines: an aesthetics of knowledge”, *Parrhesia*, Number 1, pp.1-12

—2004. *The Flesh of Words: The Politics of Writing*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

—2003. *Short Voyages to the Land of the People*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

—2001. "Ten Theses on Politics", *Theory & Event.* 5(3) (unnumbered online publication)

—1998. *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

—1991. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Rao, Mohan., Ish Mishra, Pragya Singh and Vikas Bajpai. 2013. *Communalism and the Role of the State: An Investigation into the Communal Violence in Muzaffarnagar and its Aftermath. A report* in *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLIX(2), January 11, 2014, http://www.epw.in/reports-states/fact-finding-report-independent-inquiry-muzaffarnagar-%E2%80%9Criots%E2%80%9D.html (accessed 19/12/2014)

Rao, Ursula. 2010. News as Culture: Journalistic Practices and the Remaking of Indian Leadership Traditions. Oxford: Berghahn

—2006. “News from the Field: the Experience of Transgression and the Transformation of Knowledge during Research in an Expert-site” in Ursula Rao and John Hutnyk (eds.) *Celebrating Transgression: Method and Politics in anthropological studies of culture: a book in honour of Klaus Peter Köpping*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 23-37

Ray, Rajat. 1981. “Revolutionaries, Pan-Islamists and Bolsheviks: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the Political Underworld in Calcutta, 1905-1925” in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Manohar, pp. 85-108

Robinson, Francis. 1996. “Islam and the Impact of Print in South Asia” in Nigel Crook (ed.) *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia: Essays on Education, Religion, History and Politics*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 62-97

—1993. “Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print”, *Modern Asian Studies*, 27(1), pp. 229-251

—1974. *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces’ Muslims 1860-1923*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Rudolph, Lloyd and Susanne. 1978. “To the Brink and Back: Representation and the State in India”, *Asian Survey*, 18 (4), pp. 379–400

Russell, Ralph. 1999. “Urdu in India since Independence”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Special double edition for 2-8 and 9-15 January 1999, pp. 44-48

Sahasrabuddhe, P.G. and Manik Chandra Vajpayee. 1991. *The People versus Emergency: A Saga of Struggle.* New Delhi: Suruchi Prakashan

Sahlins, Marshall. 2011. “What kinship is (part one)”, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17(1), pp. 2–19

Savarkar, Veer. 2007. *The Selected Works of Veer Savarkar*. New Delhi: Abhishek Publications

—1950. *The Story of My Transportation for Life (A Biography of Black days in Andamans)*. Bombay: Sadbhakti Publications

Schmemann, Serge. 1988. “Soviet Union Ends Years of Jamming of Radio Liberty”, *New York Times*, 1 December 1988,

http://www.nytimes.com/1988/12/01/world/soviet-union-ends-years-of-jamming-of-radio-liberty.html?pagewanted=1

(accessed 21/08/2015)

Schmitt, Carl. 2008. *Constitutional Theory*. Durham and London: Duke University Press

—2005. *Political Theology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Schoeler, Gregor. 2006. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*. Oxford: Routledge

Scott, James. C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. London: Yale University Press

—1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press

Sen, Amartya. 1999. “Democracy as a Universal Value”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 10.3, pp. 3-17

Seshan, T.N. (with Sanjoy Hazarika.) 1995. *The Degeneration of India*. New Delhi: Viking

Sethi, Harsh. and Shiv Vishvanathan. 1998. “By way of a beginning” in Sethi and Vishvanathan (eds.) *Foul Play: Chronicles of Corruption*. New Delhi: Banyan Books, pp. 1-12

Sevea, Iqbal Singh. 2012. *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Shaikh, Farzana. 1991. *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India 1860-1947*. Bombay: Orient Longman

Shannon, Claude E. 1998. "The Mathematical Theory of Communication" in Claude E. Shannon and Warren Weaver. *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, pp. 29-125

Sharma, Aradhana and Akhil Gupta. 2006. "Introduction: Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization" in Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (eds.) *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 1-41

Shaw, Graham. 1998. "Calcutta: Birthplace of the Indian Lithographed Book", *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, 27, pp. 89-111

Simons, Jon. 2011. "Mediated Construction of the People: Laclau's Political Theory and Media Politics" in Lincoln Dahlberg and Sean Phelan (eds.) *Discourse Theory and Critical Media Politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 201-221

Singer, Wendy. 2007. '*A Constituency Suitable for Ladies' And other Social Histories of Indian Elections*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Singh, Ujjwal Kumar. 2012. "Between Moral Force and Supplementary Legality: A Model Code of Conduct and the Election Commission of India", *Election Law Journal*, 11(2), pp. 149-169

—2004. *Institutions and democratic governance: A study of the Election Commission and Electoral Governance in India*. New Delhi: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

Smith, Anthony D. 1993. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. 1957. *Islam in Modern History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Soske, Jon. 2013. "The other prince: Ambedkar, constitutional democracy, and the agency of the law" in Cosimo Zene, (ed.) *The Political Philosophies of Antonio Gramsci and B.R. Ambedkar: Itineraries of Dalits and subalterns*. Oxford: Routledge, pp. 59-71

Stark, Ulrike. 2007. *An Empire of Books: The Naval Kishore Press and the Diffusion of the Printed Word in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Permanent Black

Suleiman, Susan R. 1980. "Introduction: Varieties of Audience-Oriented Criticism" in Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman (eds.) *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 3-45

Tandon, B.N. 2003. *PMO Diary - 1: Prelude to the Emergency*. New Delhi: Konark Publishers

Tarlo, Emma. 2003. *Unsettling Memories: Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi*. New Delhi: Permanent Black

Thapar, Romila. 1996. *Time as a Metaphor of History: Early India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Thompson, Dennis F. 2004. “Election Time: Normative Implications of Temporal Properties of the Electoral Process in the United States”, *The American Political Science Review*, 98(1), pp. 51-64

Thompson, Dorothy. 1984. *The Chartists: Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*. Hounslow: Temple Smith

Tiwari, Ravish. 2014. “Rise of the pracharak: The low-profile RSS apparatchik is the new face of power in the NDA”, *India Today*, 27 November 2014, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/rss-sangh-nda-bjp-l-k-advani-narendra-modi-cover-story/1/404054.html (accessed 27/12/2014)

Varadarajan, Siddharth. 2014. “The best democracy that money can buy”, *Economic Times*, April 30 2014, http://svaradarajan.com/2014/04/30/the-best-democracy-that-money-can-buy/ (accessed 27/02/2014)

Vishvanathan, Shiv. 1998. “Revisiting the Shah Commission” in Harsh Sethi and Shiv Vishvanathan (eds.) *Foul Play: Chronicles of Corruption*. New Delhi: Banyan Books, pp. 45-87

Vismann, Cornelia. 2008. *Files: Law and Media Technology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Weiner, Myron. 1991. *The Child and the State in India: Child Labor and Education Policy in Comparative Perspective*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

—1983. *India at the Polls, 1980: A study of the Parliamentary Elections*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

—1978. *India at the Polls: The Parliamentary Elections of 1977*. Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research

Winner, Langdon. 1980. "Do Artifacts Have Politics?", *Daedalus* 109(1), pp. 121-136

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. 2009. *Philosophical Investigations*. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Woolard, Kathryn A. 1998. "Introduction to Language Ideology as a Field of Inquiry" in Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard and Paul V. Kroskrity (eds.) *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 3-47

Young, Iris Marion. 2000. *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Zelliot, Eleanor. 1972. "Gandhi and Ambedkar – A Study in Leadership" in Michael J. Mahar (ed.) *The Untouchables in Contemporary India*. Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, pp. 69-95